A tragoedie or Dialoge of the vniuste vsurped primacie of the Bishop of Rome, and of all the iust abolishyng of the same, made by master Barnardine Ochine an Italian, & translated out of Latine into Englishe by Master John Bonet Doctor of Diuinitie, neuer printed before in any language.

Anno Do. 1549

XUM

¶ To the moost myghtye, and moste excellent Prince Edwarde the syxte, by the grace of God kynge of Englande, Fraunce, and Irelande, defendor of the faithe, and in earth Supreme head of the churche of England and Irelande Bernardinus Ochinus Senensis wisheth all felicitie.

ALthough god of his mere goodnes hath geuē to your Maiestie moste rich treasures, moste large kingdomes, speciall grace and loue of al people, moste high nobilitie of bludde, moste singuler ornamentes bothe of the body and of the minde, partely commyng onely of God, and partely through hys fauour obtayned also by your industry, beside other innumerable graces, whiche it hathe pleased god to endue youre hyghenes withall: Yet neuertheles all these thinges ought not, nor cannot bee compared to that benefite, whiche he hathe shewed vnto you, in geuing vnto you in such a darke worlde, and in so tendre age, suche clere light of Christ, that albeit in thys worlde he was poore, lowe, dispiced, and crucified, and your Maiestie is so riche, so highe, in so great honour, and all kyndes of felicitie, Yet not only you knowleadge and take hym for youre Lorde and maister, but also you loue hym, and that in suche sorte, that for the loue, whiche you beare vnto hym, you haue suche a godly hatred to his enemies, that folowing the blessed memory of your father, fyxte with the fauour of god.

God, and then with the aduise of youre truslie and faythfull counseylours, you haue dryuen out of your Realmes and Dominions hym, who among al the wicked hathe the highest place, and is moste aduersary to Chryst, and therfore is he, and may wourthely be called Antichryst. Nowe remayneth nothing behind, but that with hym you dryue away also (as you haue begon) his lyes, errours, Hipocrysie, Symonye, Robbery, superstycyon, Idolatrye and all wickednes. And then yf Pirrus, Alexander magnus, Anibal, Scipio Affricanus, and Julius Cesar had noble victories, triumphes in thys worlde, howe much more shal your noble actes farre passe al them, and their actes in the sighte of God, aungelles, and men, for almuch as you (being yet but almost a babe) shall ouerthrow the most myghtie, most crafty, most wicked, and cruell tiraunte, that euer was, or euer shalbe in the worlde, deliuerynge your subiectes from a longe and miserable bondage, and captiuitie.

And yet for almuche as many (suche as be blynde, and doe take hym for their god in yearth, where as they ought most highly to commende youre Maiestie for your godly procedinges, peraduenture will speake euill of so excellent an acte, I thoughte it my part, for the duetie that I owe to god, and to youre Maiestie to shewe vnto suche men the beginning of thys their Papacie, and howe it encreased, and came into so highe estimacion amonge the blinde people: So that they perceyuinge theyr weake, false, ruynouse, and deuilishe foundacion, maye leaue theyr faythe, whiche they haue in hym, and geue glorye to God, and to youre Maiestie, to whome I praye god to graunte a longe and moste blessed lyfe.

¶ The parties that doe speake in thys dialoge, are these.

i. Lucifer, and Beelzebub.

ii. Bonifface the thirde, & Doctour Sapience secretary to the Emperour.

iii. The people of Rome.
The churche of Rome.

iiii. The Pope, & mans iudgement and the people of Rome.

v. Thomas Mallucrius the maister of the horse.
Lepidus the popes chāberlain.

vi. Lucifer and Beelzebub.

vii. Christ and Michaell and Gabriell archangels.

viii. Kynge Henry the.viii. and Papista, and Thomas Archbishop of Cantorbury.

ix. Kyng Edwarde the.vi. and the Counsell.

¶ A Tragoedie or Dia loge of the vniust vsurped primacie of the Byshop of Rome, & of the iust abolishinge of the same, made by master Barnardine Ochine an Italian, and translated out of Latine into Englyshe by Master John Ponet Doctor of Diuinitie

Lucifer and Beelzebub.

MY deare faithful brethren, and moste intierly beloued frendes, forasmuche as I knowe howe muche profite ariseth of the labour & paines, that ye take in the worlde, be ye well assuered that I woulde not haue wylled you to assemble here together in Hell at thys present, were there not some great profyte to our common wealth arisyng of the same, that moued me so to doe. Ye know right wel my brethren & frendes howe wrongfully and vniustly our enemy God (without any our fault or deseruing) hurled vs downe out of heauen hedlonge, and also ye knowe what grieuous torment, miserye and calamitie we haue susteyned euer since that tyme. And althoughe he wyll nedes reigne alone in heaue, & can abyde no felowe

Esay. xiiii. Luche. x. Apo. xii.

felowe to be ioyned with him in that kingdome but doeth vsurpe it whole to hym selfe alone: yet yf he woulde haue left to vs some dominion in earth, this torment and misery of ours might better haue bene borne. But wheras we had by muche trauayle and busynes obteyned and inioyed, as it were by oure prescription, of many yeares the dominion of the world: se you not howe he hath sent ỹ same some of his whome they call Christe, to marre all that euer we haue made, and vtterly to destroy that we haue buylded? doe ye not perceaue how that fellow Christ beynge nayled vpon the crosse draweth all men to him? and doe ye not perceaue what a number of mẽ, which before were of our syde, be nowe fled to him, there to be souldiars vnderneth his banner? Yf his Apostles beyng but twelue made such a commotion throughe out the whole world, what a ruffell thinke ye wyll so many thousandes make, whome they by theyr teaching haue turned? Certainly by coniecture it shoulde seeme that the matter wyll daylye waxe worse and worse, onles this great mischiefe be wysely prouided for in season, elles wyll it at lengthe come to passe that our scepter royall shalbe plucked out of our handes, and our dominion vtterlye taken away from vs. But after longe consultinge and deuising there is now come in to my head a very handsome imaginacion, wherby we may destroy the kingdome of Christ, and stablysh our kyngdome for euer. Yf we attempte to oppresse the members of Christe with persecucion and tirrannye, we shall that waye but increase more and more our owne sorow. For as we be sufficiently taught by longe experience, they bee so perfed and led with a zeale to ỹ glorye of god, and

Iohn. xvii.

& so carried with a vehemēt heuenly spirit, that they contempne all thinge sauinge Christ onely. And this one thing semeth much to be marualled at, that whā they be spoiled for ỹ glory of Christ, or bānished in to exile, or lose their honour, their contrey, their substaunce, yea or their lyfe also, yet they earnestlye triumphe and be merye, and they esteme it as a game wonne, and a ioyfull victorie, to suffer all kyndes of misfortune for Christes sake, so that ỹ more sorow we doe vnto them, the more glorious & famous they be, and we remayne in more misery and confusion. And againe there is one other thing both more hurtefull to vs, and more to be lamented, that is, the rest of the people perceauinge them to beare suche ignominie and rebukes with so meruelouse pacience, so ioyfull heartes, and so constant a corage, be compelled to thinke thus with them selues & say: Truly God lyueth, and worketh in thē meruelously, yf they had not an experience and a tast (by a secrete mouing of the holy spirite) of another lyfe in Christe, muche better and happier then this present is, they woulde neuer be so desierous to be ridde of this present life. And yf it so be that we kyl one Christian man (as the fable is of the cutting of one of the heades of Hydra the serpent) there springeth as it were of the asches of him a hundreth immediately in his place. When we intende to bringe the kingdome of Christe to nothinge, then we make it more noble, riche, and glorious. Nowe yf we shoulde attempte to ouercome this our auncient enemyes kyngedome by reasons and argumentes, we shall doe nothinge elles but increase our owne rebuke & shame. No man can withstande their wysedome, wherwith if our reasons be compared:

com. bal. Gala. vi. phil. i.

Iohn. xii. phyl. i. Gala. ii. Heb. xii. 1. Iohn. v.

compared: truely they bee very so lichenes. Therfore it is expedient and necessary, seynge that we can not ouercome them in playne felde with open warre, to attempt their ouerthrowe by arte, policie, diligence, crafte, subteltie, gyle, and prodition. I haue conceaued in my head a deceyt of suche weight and importaunce, that yf I maye bringe it aboute after suche sorte, as I haue deuised it, there was neuer mā sawe, nether yet in the worlde was there euer anye, that deuysed the lyke bothe for the straungenes and for the force thereof. I haue deuysed with my selfe, to make a certaine newe kingdome replenished with idolatry, superstition, ignorannce, erroz, falsehode, deceit, compulsion, extorsion, treason, contencion, discorde, tiranny, and crueltie, with spoylinge, murder, ambicion, filthines, iniuries, factions, sectes, wickednes, and mischiefe, in the which kingdome all kyndes of abhominacion shalbe committed. And not withstandinge that it shalbe heaped vp with all kindes of wickednes, yet shall the Christian men thinke that to be a spirituall kingdome most holy, and most godly. The supreme head of this kyngdome shalbe a man, which is not onely sinfull and an abhominable robber and thiefe, but he shalbe synne and abhominacion it selfe, and yet for all that shall he be thought of Christian men a God in earthe, and his members beynge most wicked shalbe thought of men most holye. God sent hys sonne into the worlde, who for the saluacion of all mankynde hath humbled him selfe euen to the deathe of the crosse: and I wyll sende my sonne into the worlde, who for the destruccion and condempnacion of mankynde, shall so auaunce hymselfe that he shall take vpon hym to be made equall with

Mat. xv. c. and. ix. b. Luc. xix. a. John. xii. f. xiii. c. 1. Timo. i. a. phi. ii. a

with God. Thys is our counsell and wittie inuencion, and it is not to be doubted, but that if the matter come to passe as I woulde haue it (as my trust is that it will) we shall in shorte space see a reuenging of that our olde iniurye.

Beelze. When I beholde you moste redoubted prince, and ponder your wordes seuerally with myselfe: ye woulde not beleue howe muche I am comforted, me thinketh that I am nowe so satisfied, and that I fele my selfe so presently eased, as thoughe I my selfe had powred out all the boylynge poyson of my stomacke agaynste God. There was neuer creature that had a more wittie, a more noble, or a more worthye deuise, if the matter myght take lyke effect, as me semeth it cannot. For who would beleue that the christian menne (whiche excell in wisdome and iudgement) could be brought to this poynt to beleue that the kingdome of the deuill is the kyngdome of God. And that the supreme heade of that kingdome, being the very greate deuill of hell, ought to be adored, and worshypped for a God in earthe, and his membres honored for saynctes.

Luci. O howe goodly occasions manye tymes men lose, and howe goodly interprises come not to suche effecte as they were purposed for, by the meanes of the weake fearefulnes of mennes stomakes, in that they dare not take the thing in hande, whiche they be affrayed they shall not atcheue. Such as be of hault courage, auaunce their mynde studeing and attempting thinges of great aduenture, and so with witte, industrie, diligence, care and earnestnes, at the last they bringe thynges to passe, that bee very harde to compasse. My hope is therefore that euen as God

hath saued the worlde by Christ, so in despite of hym I shall destroye the same, & that vnder the pretence & colour of the same Christ, by the meanes wherof men maye bee the easelier deceyued. I wyl styre vp the chiefe captaynes of my kyngdome, that they maye so by craft and diligence shadow, and couer superstition and ydolatry with a fayre face and beautye of fayned holy ceremonies and of good intente (as they call it) that menne shall be made so dronken, and so amased with thys outwarde pompe and shewe, that they them selues shall not be hable to discerne trueth frō falshod, when they be drowned in the middes of the floude of ydolatrye and superstition. Moze ouer I haue determined so to extoll, and sette vp the carnall man in thys my kingdome, and the lyght of nature, and the strength of mannes fre wil, and his workes, that I shall bee hable to cast downe Christ out of his place, and to bury his great benefit, and so to minish the profit of his grace, his righteousnes and meryte euerlastinge. And furthermore I wyll bring men into that madnes that they shall thynke themselues not onely hable by their owne power and might to inioye the prayse of ryghteousnes before God, but also that the eleccion and choyse of their saluacion shall depende wholye vpon themselues. All these thinges will I persuade to men vnder a pretence of a more perfect ryghteousnes and honestie, and vnder a shadowe of a better setting forthe the glorye of the name of God. And although the principall heades of thys kyngdome be full of darkenes, of ignorance, of heresie, errour, fraude, and lyes, yet shall they shamefully take vpon them the vsurpacion of authoritie to make newe and wicked articles of the fayth,

wrasting

wrasting the holy scriptures to their croked purpose, and yet shal they thynke themselues to be in a great clearenes of lyght and trueth. For I can easely persuade vnto them that their churche is the churche of Christ, although it be nothig elles in dede, but a very assembly of Satan. I wyll persuade vnto them that they be the disciples of Christe, and the successours of Sayncte Peter, when in dede wee be their chyefe maisters, and they our vicars & supply oure roumes, and serue our cures in yearthe. Finally when in dede we reigne in them, they shall thynke they haue the holy goste within them, so that although they be in a continuall errour, yet shall they persuade meme that they are inspired with a heauenly spirite, and cannot erre. Oh lorde what a numbre of mischiefes and abhominacions shalbe committed in thys kyngdome, by reason of the wicked and sinnefull decrees, which shalbe made of gouernours of the same, when they shall glorye that they haue power to bynde the conscience of manne euen of lyke sorte as thoughe they were hayle felowe with God or rather better, and all thys vnder the shadowe of religion and holines. I wyll cause them to bee moste cruell tyrantes, and bochers of Christe and hys chosen membres, and that vnder a pretence of a zeale to the house of God. They shall attempte to hyde their vncleanes, and fylthye behauiour vnder a gaye name of sole lyfe, and shall couer their wickednes and abhominacion with an exceding wyde cloke of hypocrysie, and with a glorious shynyng tytle of religion and holynes. But what nedeth so many wordes? The chiefe head of thys kyngdome shalbe directly quite contrarye to Christe, and the membres of it, shall bee open

aduersaries to the chosen of God. But one thyng my frendes ye must diligently cõsidre, that this thing of necessitie bee alwayes kepte secrete, elles yf menne shoulde perceyue by any meanes thys our counsell, all our labors should be lost, and all oure enterpryse frustrate. Doute ye not deare brethren but that yf the thynge come to passe, that I imende, there shall be suche horrible and wycked viciousnes in thys kyngdome, that the chiefe captaynes themselues coulde not abyde them if they knewe them to be so abhominable as they shall be. Wherfore it is necessary that the greatter the wyckednes shalbee the more craftilier and coninglye they bee anourned and set furthe with some pleasaunt beautyfull face of religion and a gaye paynted vayle of holynes.

Belze. All these thinges we alowe ryght well, and be also redy to obey your counsell, and to bestowe all the powers of our wytte and myght to set forwarde thys noble enterpryse, howebeit first and formest we thynke it very expedient that ye disclose playnly vnto vs all your intent and purpose, that we maye direct al oure labours and study to that ende, and so to bryngе this noble enterpryse aboute euen as we wil with the common consent of vs all.

Luci. Euen as vpon Chriſte dependeth the whole saluacion of all mankynde, so is it necessary for vs to deuise a supreme head vpon whom maye depend the whole condempnacion of all mankynde. And as the sonne of God for the saluacion of the worlde dyd abase hymselfe from the hyghe state of hys diuinitie, and endued hymselfe with mannes nature: of a lyke sorte is it nedefull for the destruccion of the worlde that there be some man which shal auaunce hymselfe

aboue

aboue Chriſt and aboue God hymſelfe, that menne beyng blinded by ſynkynge and filthye ſuperſticion maye feare, honour, and obey a mortall manne more then the very lyuyng lorde. And more ouer it is neceſſary that thys man be ſo furniſhed with all wickednes and iniquitie that I maye worthelye ſaye of hym: thys is my well beloued ſonne, in whome is my onely delyte, heare him: Euen as the heauenly father longe agone dyd teſtifie of hys ſonne Chriſt.

Beelze. Me thinketh that I heare the liuely image of Antichriſte hymſelfe handſomly and properly deſcribed of you.

Luci. It is euen ſo in dede as thou ſayeſt.

Beelze. But who is (I praye you) ſo ſhameleſſe to receyue ſo wicked a dignitie?

Luci. Receyue it quod he? Thys dignitie ſhall be honoured and ſette forthe with ſo muche ryches, ſo much pleaſure, and ſo much habundaunce of thinges, ſo greatly befrended with noble menne, ſo decked with honour and greate welthe of thys preſent lyfe, that all the prynces of the earthe ſhalbe deſirous to atteyne thereunto. And as for thabominacions of thys hyghe ſeate, they ſhall ſo be couered with a gay glorious outwarde ſhowe of holines, that they thē ſelues, whiche ſhall ſitte in the ſame, ſhall not be hable to knowe their owne wickednes. No, (a manne woulde ſcaſely beleue it) they ſhal thinke themſelues very gods in earth. As farre as my wit wil ſerue me, I thynke the Biſchoppe of Rome the moſte mete inſtrument to bringe about the thynge that we intend. Becauſe that Rome is the heade citie of the worlde, it ſhalbe no hard thynge to perſuade menne that the biſhop therof is the head of all chriſtian menne, and

the churche of Rome to be mother of all other churches. And agayne thinsaciable ambicion of the Romans, their crafte, their malice and gyle, wherwith they be naturally infected, shal not be the only thyng that shall helpe forwarde our purpose: but also the fauoure and grace that they obtayne at the Emperoures handes of Rome. Furthermore it is not vnknowen vnto you that by reason of the manyfolde hereſies which we haue ſowen, in Affrike, and in the eaſt partes of the worlde, what a numbre of biſchops haue fled to Rome for ſuccoure of the Emperoure. The byſchop of Rome (as a manne that gapeth for this honour of the higheſt place) intertaineth al men very frendly, declaryng tokens of kyndnes and loue towardes euery body, in ſo much that ſome of a mere ſimplicitie, and other ſome by crafte and fraude will be ſo deſirous of the election and apointment of this highe dignitie, that they wyll bee very glade to gyue theyr voyce to the byſchop of Rome. Who on the other parte is ſo repleniſhed with deceyt and ſuttelty, & with ſuch a botomles deſier to be a Prince, that it ſhalbe eaſy for him with the helpe and fauour of our ſpirite to attayne to this moſte highe dignitie, namely becauſe as ye know they be ſufficiently furniſhed al ready with learning, and alſo holpen by the power and worke of our ſpirit. The churches of the Eaſt part of the world were eaſily infected with the hereſies, that were ſowen abrode, & becauſe theyr hereſis be now knowen to all menne, they can not infect thother churches of Chriſte, whiche bee more ſyncerelye inſtructed. But as for this churche of Rome it muſte be infected by litle & litle not in the outward ſhowe, but in the inwarde bowelles, and that ſo extremelye

vntill

vntyll it cannot be made more wicked (thoutwarde pompe and shewe and a certayne forme of the church of Christ beyng preserued)that by the meanes therof,it maye bryngе all other churches more easly into errour,and may be the onely chiefe bredyng mother of errour and wickednes, lyke as it shalbe taken for the mother of all other churches. Thus haue I declared vnto you(deare brethren and frendes)all my whole inuencion and imaginacion: and I haue opened also and set before your eyes the ende whereunto we must direct all oure labours and study. It resteth now i you that euery one apply his whole mind to ỹ vttermost of hys power for the performaunce of so noble an enterpryse,and leaue nothyng vndone,that shall seme expedient for the bryngінge about therof. Doubte ye not but the tyme is at hande,when wee maye reuenge our olde iniury agaynst God. And for asmuch as he would not suffre vs beig most worthy creatures,to bee felowes with hym in heauen: wee wyll bryngе to passe by our industrye,that the vilest manne and moste cast awaye in the worlde shalbe aboue hym in earthe. And nowe that euery one of you in hys degre maye the more cherefully applye hymselfe about thys busines, I promise you,ye nede not doubt, but you maye bee well assured that we shall in shorte space bryngе the thyng to passe that we desier. For in thys poynte wee haue God hymselfe fauourable vnto vs,whe in sondrye places of scripture prophecied that there should an Antichrist come, and nowe is the tyme expired,wherin that wycked head of Christendome ought to come into the world. Then yf God wyll not be made a lyar it is necessary, that at the last he come and be disclosed to the whole worlde

Esay.xxxi. Luc.x. Apoca.xii.

Mat.xxiiii.

XUM

worlde. For with thys whyppe God wyll scourge and punishe the false christians. Who because they woulde not beleue the trueth, God of hys rightfull iudgement wyll that they shall beleue lyes, and bee
ii. Thess. ii. worthely deceyued as Paule hathe wrytten. There were neuer, nor neuer shalbe more shynynge ceremonies neither more beawtifull, wherby to allure men vnder a coloure of holines, then those shalbe, whyche Antichriste and his membres shall deuise to be vsed amongest menne. And know ye more ouer, for a confirmacion of their doctryne and liuynge, that they maye be more easly deceyued, God wyll suffer many wōders, many signes and miracles to be shewed by vs, by reason of whom euen the very chosen shall be
Mat. xxiiii. seduced if it were possible, as Christe hym selfe hath prophecied, I am sure ye haue in remembraūce how that in the beginning of the churche of Christ when it was moste pure, a a longe season after, there were chosen aswel in Rome for to be Bishoppes such men as were moste godly, best learned in Goddes holye scriptures, and as most diligently and faithfully laboured to auaunce goddes true word and his glory, but afterwarde when good discipline began to decaye, and we had powred ambicion, darnel, and discencion into the worlde, then were chosen to be Byshoppes by their owne procuremente, not suche as were most godly, but suche as were most worldely, most ambitious and craftie, seking more their owne glory and lucre then the auauncement of goddes glorye, and the exercise of their office, rather pluckyng from the shepe their mylke, than fedyng them with good pastures. So that the name of a Bysshop now, is no more the name of a verye paynfull office as it was

was in tymes paſt, but of a great pompe & dignitie. Furthermore they haue ordeyned accordinge to the example of the olde Patriarches Abraham, Iſaac, & Iacob three newe Patriarches one of Antioche in Aſia, another of Alexandria in Affrik, and the thyrd of Europe in Rome. Of a like ſorte ye know that a long ceaſon all Chriſtian men in the church of Chriſt haue ben taken, for ſpiritual, ſanctfied, & religious mē, as they bee called in the ſcripture, and as they are in dede, for almuche as they be halowed in baptiſme, & dedicated to god to be his children, and to bee led by his ſpirite. But the infidels, whiche bee not of the church of Chriſt as mē vtterly without Chriſt be accoūted (as they be i dede) prophane, hethē, & vngodly. But now of late dayes only a ſorte of cloyſterers diſguyſed men in apparel, and lyuinge from other men begin to bee taken for ſpirituall, religyous and holy menne, though they bee neuer ſo vicyous. All other Chriſtian menne be they neuer ſo godly, and repleniſhed with the heauenly ſpirite, yet bee they iudged prophane, and vnworthy to touche theyr holy garmentes with theyr lytle fynger. Thys wonderfull dignitie and magnificence ſhall ſet out the royaltie and glorye of oure Monarchie and ſole kyngdome not a lytell. Beleue me deare bretheren wee haue a mete tyme, and opportunitie for our triumph, for our glory and victory. God for thauauncement, and for thincreaſe, and eſtabliſhment of hys churche gaue to it the holye ſcripture for a rule to lyue by for euer: likewiſe for the increaſe, the inlargynge, and confirmation of our churche we will giue vnto it oure decrees and Cannons, which although they bee for the moſte parte prophane and wicked, yet ſhall they ne-

uertheles not only seme good and holy, but also they shalbe take for the veray squire and rule, wherbi the holy scripture shalbee tryed. Furthermore because God knewe right well that his holy word is a thing most necessary aboue all other: he commaunded his Apostles that they shoulde preache throughe out the worlde the voyce of the gospell, which in dede is the trew chief office of them, whiche wil be taken for the trewe ministers of Christe. For although baptisme (as all men knowe) be a ceremonye ordeined of God both holy and necessary, yet was the Apostle Paule so diligent, and busied with preaching the worde of god, that he christened very few with his owne handes but left that office to other ministers. But nowe shall the tyme come, yea and it is at hand, wherin the chiefe headdes of this our kingdome shall not onely chalenge to be the successors of thapostles, but also of Christ him selfe: they shalbe striken with such a madnes that they shall thinke it a vile shamefull thynge for them to preache the gospell, & therfore shall they substitute vnder them symple Sir Johns, who for the fashions sake shal pretende and doe the outward ceremonye of preachinge, but the doctrine wherwith they shall instructe the people shalbe handeled and infected after theyr owne fashion. And as for the byshops they shalbee giue al together to esteme thinges of the world and of the flesche. And yet to thende that they may appere before menne as though they were byshops, in dede, at certayne tymes of the yere they shall set forthe sundry ceremonies with a great shew to the people, which shalbe no lesse colde, dumme and folishe than wicked and superstitious, whiche shalbe framed, and wrought in our workehowse of hel. But

brefely to comprehende an endles sea of matters in fewe wordes, know ye my brotherne, that this kingdome of ours shalbe so pestilent & abhominable, that it shall not only infecte & hurte the church of god, the holy ceremonies & constitucions, trew worshippinge of god & the sacred scripture it selfe: but it shall also destroy & ouerthrow other lyberall artes & sciences.

Belzee. When I consyder howe shorte the lyfe of man is it semeth to me a thinge vnpossible, that one bysshop of Rome, in so shorte a space shoulde bring to passe so many mischefes.

Luci. Brother me thinketh that ye be very dull. For this name of Antichrist is not the proper name of any one man, but is a common name to many, for notwithstanding that it is a fyt name for all them, that be contrary and enemies to Christ, yet chiefly and aboue all other it agreeth to those bysshops of Rome which vsurpe tyrannie lordshyp and dominion aboue all other bysshops. Nowe all the difficultie and hardnes of this busines standeth in the beginninge therof, that is to saye, in gyuinge a beginninge to a matter of so greate importaunce, and that same bysshope of Rome may be founde, who dareth giue the fyrste aduenture to be called the head of al other bysshops. Yf we may once obtein this at one of theyr handes, the reste wil easly folowe willingly, & daily wil they finde out newe wayes for the stablishment of theyr dominion. Therfore let vs al goe nowe out of hand & euery man prepare him selfe to doe hys indeuour according to his calling, & I as your chief capitaine wil firste proue & formoste attempt to perswad this godly imaginacion of mine to Boneface the bysshope of Rome, and I dout not but that I shall obteine pre-

lent fauour of his carnall wisedome.

Boneface the thyrd.

Doctor Sapience Secretary to Themperor.

O immortall God howe sweete and pleasaunte a thing is the glory of the worlde, trewly it is more to be estemed, then all worldlye treasures or pleasure. I am the Patriarch of Rome, and haue vnder my tuicion and gouernaunce an infinite number of people: Who beig prested with any kind of afflicciō, straight they come runnyng to me as thike as hoppes, they al honour me, they haue theyr eyes set vpon me, I haue money at will, & I may haue all kindes of pleasures at my commaundement. Yf I coulde bring it to passe to obteine at the handes of Phocas the Emperor the dominion, and principality ouer al other bysshopes of the worlde: I woulde thinke my selfe to haue attayned euen the verye highest state of felicitie, and happye lyfe, that myght be. Yf then I coulde not by wisdome, and industrie bringe to passe, that men shoulde worshippe me as a god in earthe: I might worthely be accounted a fole, and muche vnworthy of so great a felicitie, but what shall I doe? I can by no meanes disclose this my fantasye to any manne, but I shall forthewith disclose this mine arrogancie, and he shal iudge me a manne full of ambycion. But I see master Sapiens the Emperours secretarye myne olde frende. Truly I could not haue founde a more fit instrument for my purpose: if he will be so good to me as to open this thinge to the Emperors Maiestie, not as a thinge diuised and found out of me, but rather of his owne head, as though I durst not so hardye

dy of my head with or mynd so great a matter.

Sapi. God saue your highenes most Reuerēd father.

Boni. Ye be very hartely welcome. What newes?

Sapi. Nothing but ỹ al is nought. Sūdry letters ther be brought to the Emperors Maiesty, the contentes of the which dothe declare that there is such a number of factions, sectes, contencions, and of diuerse kindes of heresies in the church of Christ, that without goddes present helpe, the churche will shortly be vtterly vndone.

The communication betwē Boniface Bishop of Rome and Doctour Sapience the Emperours Secretarye.

Boni. Your wordes gyue me both occasion, and incoragement to disclose vnto you, as to my most faithfull and deare frende, my whole mynde and intent. I wyll therfore open vnto you the secrete and hyd purposes of my mynde. But because the matter is of great waight, fyrst I will desier you to kepe counsel.

Sapi. Sir that is a thinge, that belongeth to myne office, to kepe secretes, for asmuche as I am secretary to the Emperours Maiestie a dignitie whereunto I shoulde neuer haue attayned, if I had not sumwhat learned what thinge it is amongest men, pryuyly or openly to whist or to talke. Wherfore bee not afraied, say what ye will, and thinke with your selfe that ye may safely say your mind to me, for assuraūce wherof I promes you faithfully that I will open it to no man, neither speake anye thinge therof to anye man lyuing, but as you shalbe contented.

Boni. For one epistle, and one message that themperor hath receaued of factions, and heresies, which abound in Asia and Affrike I haue receaued a thousand letters, and messages: for all good men resort to me as to theyr only refuge and succor, and I comfort them in their afflictions and calamities. Therbe ma-

ny also not all of the beste sorte, which resorte to my gard and tuicion, some leste they should worthely be punished of theyr superiors for their offenses: and other, that vnder the shadowe of my fauour they may be promoted to some dignitie. And I of very humanitie and gentlenes can not but intertaine them very frendely and shewe al tokens of kindnes vnto them, be they good or be they euyll that come to me for refuge. It is not ambition that moueth me to thys thynge, neyther gooe I about by thys meanes to increase my pryuate commoditie, or to auaunce the worthynes of my dignitie, (as God he knowethe): but christian charitie, and a true zeale to Goddes honour moueth me to doe thys my dewtie: vnfortunate had the Christian menne been, whiche dwell in those countreyes had not I holpen them with my labour and diligence. Ther is none amongest thē, who desirethe not thincrease and settyng forthe of myne honour, that my authoritie and helpe maye be a staye vnto them in suche thynges as belonge to their profite. But I of a certayne naturall inclinacion (I can not tell howe) bothe naturallye and wyllynglye abhorre all pompe and dignitie. Yet to say as I thinke, and as my conscīēce geueth me to speake the trueth, I feare me muche lest all churches, not onely they of whome I spake euen nowe, but our churches also in shorte space wyll be vndone onles they be gouerned of some vniuerfall supreme head. Ye knowe ryght well, that where is no order, there of necessitie must be confusion, neither can there be any certayne order except there be a head, wherunto all thynges muste be applied as to the chiefe state of gouernaunce. And to put you out of doubt, christen menne be not nowe

of

of that ſimplicitie, and vertuous behauiour as they were in the begynnynge of the primatiue churche, wherfore now it is neceſſari for them to haue a head whiche may puniſhe the euill, and reward the good. Ye ſe with your eyes howe many ſectes and hereſies be nowe in the churche of Chriſt, and there is ſmale lykelyhode of amendement, but that it ſhalbee daylye worſe and worſe yf ſome remedy be not founde betymes, ſhortly ſhall enſue amongeſt menne ſuche a licentious and vnbrydled libertie that euery manne wyll attempt to inuent a newe kynde of religion of his owne braine, ſo that euery man ſhal beleue what hym liſteth, & ſhal alſo refuſe whatſoeuer ſhall ſeme contrary to his priuate commoditie. Wherfore it is very neceſſary that there bee ſome ſupreme head to reduce all menne to an vnitie in religion, wherby all waues of opinions may of a Chriſtian ſorte bee calmed and ceaſſed. Experience whiche deceyueth no manne but is the chiefe mayſtres in conſultacion, teacheth thys thynge ſo euidently that it cannot bee denied. Now that we haue by ſage coniecture eſpied it to be neceſſary to haue one head in the churche and chriſtian commen welth: I iugde that chriſten men wyl more wyllynglye and readly admit and receyue me for their head and gouernour than anye other manne, whiche thing may be compaſſed bothe more ſafely and better without buſines, yf the Emperour woulde helpe it forward (being ſo profitable a thing as it is) with his royall authoritie, agaynſt whoſe wyll and pleaſure as I dare attempte nothynge: ſo would I not doubt but that yf he woulde doe thys thyng hymſelfe, it were no ſmale meanes to encreaſe his glory, and eſtabliſhe the continuaunce of his me-

more

more for euer, and also for thinlarging of his imperiall dominion & dignitie. For yf I should acknowelage perpetuall obedience, reuerence, and fidelitie to hym (as I am bounde and as my mynde is to doe) he might well thynke all the dominion and authorytie, whiche I shoulde haue, to pertayne also to hym. Nowe yf you thinke it good to common with ỳ Emperours maiestie in thys matter when ye shall see tyme and place conuenient, (because I knowe that he louethe you singularlye well, and that he settethe muche by your counsell, and I knowe how good ye be to persuade a matter, and also I am well assured that ye bee my very frende) I doubt not but ye shall easly bryng to passe this my desire. And for my parte, bysides that I shoulde be alwayes bound vnto you, I woulde declare vnto you in dede after no slender and meane sorte howe earnestly I loue you for that I had receyued so great a benefit at youre handes. And I wyll be playne with you, my desire is, that ye wyll open all these thinges to themperours maiestie as thoughe they were firste deuised by you, and as though I had neuer talked nor spoken of them. For me thynketh it a wisdome: when I haue obtayned my sute to shewe my selfe as though it were agaynst my wyll, that I myght say amongest all men that I toke not thys dignitie wyllyngly, but by force and compulcion.

Sapi. I perceyue all that your highnes hath in this plentifull oracion declared, and I promise you my fayth, and true diligence for the compassing of thys matter, and that my good heart, and minde shall appere to your highnes to be voide of al dissimulacion. And as soone as I shall perceyue what aunswere

Cesars

Cesars maiestie wyll make, I shall declare his wyll and pleasure to your moste noble lordeship, and because I am nowe euen cloyed with to many businesses and am also sure that there be a great numbre lokynge for me at the court, I wyll take my leaue of your highnes oneles ye wyll commaunde me any other seruice.

Boni. Nothyng but that ye wyll humbly commēd me to Cesars maiestie.

Sapi. I wyll with al my heart. I thought the tyme of my tariaunce with this manne to be a whole yere long: he displeased me so with suche a rolling rhetorical vanitie of wordes. Oh Lorde god that there canne be so muche ambition and desire of honor hid in the brest of a man, and that of a christian man, yea and of a byshoppe whiche will be accounted most holy. Yt is no mernayle that he intertayned so frendely all straungers that came to Rome, and often tymes praysed them earnestly to the Emperoure, for it appeareth by the matter it selfe that it was for none other purpose, but to obtaine the fauoure of his neghbours, and straungers for the better attaynynge to this dignitie, whiche he hunteth for. And to cloke his hypocrisie with a gaye outwarde shewe, he sayeth it is very necessary for the church to haue one supreme vniuersal head of the churche in earthe, as thoughe Christe were not the true head of his churche, or els dyd not regarde thynges in earthe, but satte in heauen idle and slepinge. He affirmithe also that yf this head be not stablyshed in the churche of Christe, it wyl shortly decay and be vndone: but I am of a contrarye iudgemente: yf Cesars maiestie fulfyll hys ambicious desire the churche of Christ wyll not only

decaye, but it wyll vtterly fall downe, as thoughe it were plucked vp by the rootes. As thoughe the Byshoppes which be already were not sufficient for the churches that they haue. And yf there chaunce anye contencion to aryse amongest them they haue counsels, by whome to make an ende of their stryfe and controuerlies. What knowelage canne thys false wretche haue of the churches in Affryke? Or of the churches in Asia, where he was neuer in al the dayes of hys lyfe? but what talke I of Affrike & Asia? How canne he gouerne those churches that bee in Europe whose language for the most parte he vnderstandeth not? By the reason of the great distaunce of places, & varietie of the nacions and menne? Who euer sawe one Crane gyde all other Cranes in the worlde? Who euer sawe a shepard, whiche coulde alone feede all the shepe in the yearth? He were worthye prayse yf he coulde gouerne hys owne well though he were not a whit troubled with caringe for the rest. Who knoweth whether Wolfes maye bee founde in hys owne flocke, and whether he maye worthylye be iudged the chiefe Wolfe of all? It is not many yeres agone sence John Bysshop of Constantinople attempted the same interpryse that he might bee made the vniuersall Bysshop, whome the whole churche dyd wythstande, and namelye Gregory the fyrste thys mans predeceslour, who in hys letters amongest other thynges wrote vnto hym. That the name of a vniuersall Bysshop was a foliche, wicked, proude, and a churche robbing name, and yf he shoulde goe about to vsurpe that name, he shoulde doe nothynge elles but make hymselfe lyke to Lucifer, and be a fore messenger of Antichryste, in takinge awaye the glory and dignitie from other bishops hys brethrene, and so to

trouble

tronble the concorde, and vnitie of the faythfull, and vndoe the church of Chrift. Nowe yf thys ambicious felow may by craft and futteltie obtayne that thing, which his predeceffours with the common prayfe & conſent of all menne dyd moſt iuſtly condempne in other, fuerly it ſhall not be done without great offēce of all good menne. Thys I dare be bolde to ſay, that neither Affryke, neither Grecia, neither the reſt of the churches of the Eaſt wyll euer conſent hereunto, but wyll rather reſiſt and rebell amongeſt themſelues: and ſo ſhall the ſeameles cote of Chriſt be torne in many partes. This ſhalbe ỳ fyrſt fruite which ſhall ſpryng of thys dyueliſhe ſtate & authoritie. Furthermore the churches either wyl not conſent thereunto, or elles yf they doe conſent it ſhalbe by compulcion, becauſe they maye eaſly perceyue howe muche miſchiefe thys meruelous tyranny ſhall brynge with it. Yf all the tyrantes whiche euer haue bene were ioyned together, they al neuer dyd ſo much miſchiefe to the worlde as this one is like to doe. I ſee p'ainly that thys matter is a thyng moſt pernicious and hurtful, wherof I ought neyther to thynke, nor ſpeake but onely to put away ſo great a myſchiefe from chriſtian mens neckes. Yet becauſe I haue made promyſe, I wyll ſee what the Emperour wyll ſaye to it, and will talke earneſtly with hym of the matter, foraſmuche as this ambicioufe bragger did declare plainly that he wouldeſee me well rewarded if I wouldedoe that lay in me to helpe the matter forwarde. Beſides this, becauſe he is named to be our countreimā one of the Romans I am bownde to promote hys ſute and purpoſe. And who knoweth what he wyll doe ſhortely after for my ſake if he obteyne this dignitie by my procurement. Truly it is not lyke that

he will forget so great a benefit receaued at my hand. And bee it that there arise contencion amongest the byshoppes, what is that to me? Naye the more they stryue amongest themselues, the more shal they nede themperors helpe with whome I am chief, and so my vantage shalbe the latter. Therfore will I bring this thinge about, and that with as muche celeritie and spede as is possible.

Bon. Sence I disclosed my mynde to Doctor Sapiens, I haue been wonderfully troubled. And who knoweth whether he will (in so weighty a matter as this is) kepe counsell or not accordinge to hys promes. He hathe a number of frendes whome he will put in trust with some of my matters. And what if he opē somewhat of my wyl in declaring the matter to the Emperor, but beit that he doe none of all these thinges: yet can it not be but that Cesars maiesty of him self (as he is replenished with wisdome, & excedingly practised in suche kynde of feactes) shal by and by suspecte that this arrowe came out of my quiuer, and that the matter was altogether of my diuisinge, and so my crafte shalbe espied, and I put to shame. Furthermore if it so chaunce that he obteyne not my sute at the Emperors hand, what haue I then els done but disclosed vnto hym my botomles ambicion to no purpose? But if he obteyne (as I pray god he maye) all men will say with one accorde that I haue brought it to passe with muche labor & industry, and so shall the thing be lefte in writinge to the posteritie. And so shal I be both to menne of this present age, and to thē which shalbe in time to come a lawghing stocke, and a iesting stole. All men good

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and euell will haue theyr eyes set vpon me, and (as it were) poynt me out with theyr finger. I shalbe hãpered in a thousand places. And one thinge is greatest mischief of all, I alone shalbe the first beginner, and the chiefe original of all thabominations, which my successors shall cõmytte in al the whole world by the reason of thys tyrannye. But why trouble I my selfe any longer with a rablement of reasons? The die is caste happe what happe will: and I came not sauinge myne honour drawe backe agayne from my purpose: therefore me thinketh it more mete to stand to the matter stourly tarying to see the ende. Yf the matter come to passe as I would haue it (as I trust it will) I will fynde a meanes quickly how I maye fynde frendes plentie. The matter of it selfe telleth, & dayly experience sheweth, that all men hunte for the frendshippe of them who excell in riches, and authoritie, all thoughe they be very tyrannes. And to thintente that men shall the more imbrace and magnifye me, thinkinge me to be a Chryst in earth, I will cause it by letters to be blowen abrode ouer al the worlde, that this high dignitie chaunced to me bothe not lokinge for it, and all together vnwilling to receaue it, and that I woulde haue receaued it in no wyse, had not the zeale that I haue to the house of god compelled me, that is to saye to prouyde a remedy for heresies, factiõs, and an infinit number of other mischiefes, by the whiche the churche of Chryst is oppressed. But Master Sapience is come and hys iourney is towardes me with spede, he semeth very mery, no dout he bringeth me some good newes.

Sapi. Youre moste reuerent hyghenes should not maruayle that I haue differred and prolonged the

time for answere to the matter, which I know to be to vs both very pleasant, longer then either of vs both did suppose. Truly the cause why I dyd so was no negligence, but rather that I might bringe the thing to passe more diligently and more effectuously. I choase my time and place when I might best for our profyt declare thys matter to the Emperor. Yester night after supper me thought hys Maiestie was merier then he was wont to be, he walked forth into a gardene, and being there alone he called me to him a parte. There he beganne to declare vnto me hys power, hys ryches, and to extolle and magnifie the greatnes of his Empier & dignitie, and further he opened vnto me certayne secret counselles, wherby he thought to increase his ryches, & to cause hys whole dignitie roiall to be the more estemed. And I perceauinge this thinge to make sumwhat for our purpose did not only confirme and approue hys intente, but also added this thynge more ouer: that he now had such occasion and opportunitie gyuen hym to increase his honour as neuer other Emperor had before him, so that he would speake but one worde. Nowe because these wordes pleased him wonderfully: he desiered me earnestly to declare vnto hym how, and by what meanes thys thyng might be brought to passe. Then sayed I: yf your imperiall Maiestie would attempte to subdewe the dominions of other princes ye maye not thinke that it would be brought to passe without muche bludshed, without greate daunger and difficultie. But ye haue now an occasion offered vnto you of god, whiche if it will please you to take when it is offered, ye shal not onely without difficultie, but also with muche ease and fauour of al partes

subdwe

ſuddew all Chriſtian regions. So that thoſe people, whiche be furtheſt of ſhall come and ſubmitte themſelues to youre Maieſtie gladly and willingly. Whē I perceaued ẏ he gaue very good hede to my talke, whyles I ſhoulde open thys hyd myſtery, fyrſte I declared vnto him howe the churche of Chriſte was ſhaken and toſſed with ſundry miſeries and calamities, and for none other cauſe but that it lacked one ſupreme ſpiritual, and vnyuerſall heade in earthe, whereunto all menne that were afflicted with anye kynde of myſery myght reſorte as to a common refuge, and that all menne bothe knewe and deſiered this thinge. I declared alſo howe thys heade for the opiniōs ſake of religion, (whereunto al men be naturally inclined,) ſhoulde eaſely bee receaued of all the whole worlde. And more ouer by reaſon of the thunder boltes of excomunicacion it ſhould be terrible to all nacions, ſo that in ſhorte ſpace it ſhoulde inioye a fyrme & perfecte Dominion. Beſides this I hewed him that if one of the Emperors ſubiectes ſhould be choſen to be this ſupreme heade, whiche ſhoulde hang all together vpon the Emperors will and pleaſure, he ſhoulde bee a very mete inſtrument eaſly to compaſſe the dominion of the whole world. And thus I came nerer by litle and lytle to the communicacion of your moſte reuerend hyghnes. I dyd put hym in remembraunce how much you fauoured hys Maieſtie, and howe mete a manne aboue all other ye ſemed for this purpoſe, and agayne for the greate eſtimacion in that ye were byſhoppe of Rome, in the whiche roume ye dyd nowe ſeruice with hyghe prayſe and commendacion, and alſo how muche this thing was deſiered of very many menne, which ſhoulde increaſe

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the renowne of the Emperors Maiestie with a great reioysinge of all nacions. This thinge also I added: Onles his Maiestie woulde declare and establiche this heade by his authoritie, it would shortely come to passe, that some other woulde attempt the same thinge, and bring it to passe he not knowinge therof, yea thoughe he did gayne saye it, who (to hys Maiesties greate shame and rebuke) woulde chose some other whiche was no subiecte to his highnes, but (so it might chaunce) his aduersary and foe, that either woulde spoyle vtterly, or at the leste muche vexe the borders of the Romayne Empier. In cõclusion these and suche lyke reasons preuayled so much with him, that being persuaded he interrupted me of my tale, and spake to me before I had made an ende of shewing my mynde, prayinge and besechynge me that I would goe busely about this matter, & that I should come straight way to your hyghnes in his name & so in hys name pray you very earnestly & ye would not refuse thys condicio thus offered, neither disdaine to receaue this burden what so euer it bee. And this is trewe also I maye tell your highnes in counsell: The Emperour charged me priuily that I shoulde not tell you that he desired thys thinge so muche for the priuate commoditie, whiche myght thereby to hym insewe, but for the glory of god, and the profit of the churche. Thus your hyghnes hath the begynnynge, the myddest, and thend of my message.

Boni. My dere frende Sir Sapience, not withstandinge that the laste daye I commoned with you somwhat houerly of thys matter, yet after that I hadde wayed it more substancially with my selfe, I perceaued it to bee a daũgerous enterprise and ful of perell

perell, & so harde to cõpasse & so paynful that I haue repented me more then a thousand tymes sence that euer I begane it. So ỳ if I could haue conueniently brought it to passe in time, I would haue chãged my former purpose and haue desiered you neuer to open your mouth, neither to Themperor, neyther to any mã els for this or such lyke matter. Thys I am suer is very trew, ỳ there was some heuenly spirite ỳ moued me as sone as I fyrste spake of this matter. But nowe am I in suche a perplexitie and doubt that I wot not what is best to doe. For thys is once, I loue quietnes, and my desire is to passe ouer the rest of my lyfe in reste and peace without ruffyllynge and busynes. And on the other syde agayne there is a certayne zeale to the honour and glory of God which stirreth and pryeketh me, neither would I wyllingly resist the callinge of the holy goste. Then commeth in the authoritie of the Emperours Maiestie, whose becke, worde and request, I take to be as a cõmaundement vnto me. Therfore tell themperoure howe that when I thought nothyng lesse then thys thing, ye layd glorye of the name of god to my charge, and at the last when ye had proued the thynge to me by excedyng strong reasons, that I coulde not refuse thys heauenly vocation being freely offred vnto me, without a manifest and open iniurie to goddes holy name, and therfore that I was compelled to receyue thys offer. But of thys one thynge I desire you to moue Cesars maiestie very earnestlye, and ye shall moue it to hym in myname, that is, that he wyl consider agayne and agayne, when I am auaunced vp into thys hyghe estimacyon, I shal haue many earnest aduersaries whose dartes he hymselfe muste

defend, and also garde and preserue me in that place wherin I am by hym placed. And I thynke it in very dede more wisdome, and more standing with bothe our honours, that euen at the very first begining neither he should graūt, neither I vsurpe this supreme authoritie, for the auoyding of all tumult as muche as maye be. Yt is ynough at the first that I bee proclamed chiefe Bishop of all. And afterwarde as time and occasion shall serue we wyll goe on further a litle and litle, byeng dominion and authoritie mete for suche a dignitie. Therefore let hym spedely cause the wrytinges to bee penned, and proclamacion to bee made throughout the worlde of this hys determinat mynde and pleasure. Shortlye after wyll I come humblye to see hym, and furthermore I wyll haue in remembraunce howe muche I am bounde to you, and what I haue promised you when tyme shall require.

Sapi. All thys shall be done, and fare ye well. Euē as of late oure Byshoppe disclosed vnto me his wonderfull ambicion, so nowe I perceyue that he hathe hid within him such an hipocrisie as neuer was herd of. I know that he rūneth mad for thys dignitie, and yet went he about with his craftie glosynge and deceytfull wordes to persuade that he wouldе neuer receyue it when it was offered. Nowe seyng that he goeth about to hyd it from me, vnto whome he first openedit, howe wyll he handle other that knowe not hys deceytfulnes. Surely hys shamles ambicion deserueth no lesse but that I should let all the matter quayle, whiche thyng wouldе be very acceptable to God no doubt. But we haue wadid further herin thē is easie for vs to stope it, beynge almoste brought to

passe

passe alredy. Themperour himselfe is so amased and dronken with my wordes, that by no meanes possible canne I withdrawe hym from his purpose. And I my selfe who was the beginner and procurer of thys matter am forced not to forsake my sute, but rather with my iudgement to alowe it, and with my diligence to perfourme it. What shall a manne doe? Suche chaunce doeth chaunce to them that attempt noughtie matters. I wyll get me hence, the soner I bryng thys thyng to passe the soner shal I be deliuered of thys noughtie and paynefull fantasies.

The people of Rome.

The churche of Rome.

I vnderstande by common reporte that the bysshop of Rome is made head of all other churches by Phocas oure Emperour. Yf it bee trewe, he hathe done a thynge more folishe, more abhominable, more perrelous & more wicked thē euer was either done or herd of. The Emperor knoweth not how much ambicion, gyle, malice, craft, and wickednes reygneth in hym, he hathe begonne to broode in hys bosome suche a yonge adder as wyll shortly shot vp to a mightie dragon, and wyll at lengthe digge out his owne eyes. This priestlynge in continuaunce of tyme, wyll so growe in ambicion pryde and bostyng in payne glory that he will stablishe hys seate aboue the dignitie of Themperours. There wyll a tyme come, and it is now very nye at hand when it shalbe nedefull for the Emperour if he will haue hys crowne he shall aske it & receyue it (if it please him to geue it) at our bishops handes, and that he shall come as an humble suter to hym and kysse his fete, and he (in the name of God)

a very holy bysshoppe shall trede with hys fote vpon the Emperours throte. Neyther wyll he bee contented with all that ignominy but in conclusion he wyll stryke of his heade. Yt maye chaunce peraduenture that themperours name onelye shall remayne vnto hym, but he shall not possesse one foote of land which shall properly be called themperours. O lamentable state of thee O people of Rome. What misery arte thou falling into? Thou shalt bee taken from ȳ great dominion and noble renowme wherin thou diddest florysshe in tymes paste, and shortly shalt bee made a dryuen drudge and a vile slaue of a most foule castaway priest. Yf our old aũceant noble harted Romãs shoulde lyue in those dayes, how woulde they abide it when they should see, the sacred senat house repleneshed with so many wycked theues? But I see the churche of Rome commynge out of the church of S. Iohn Lateran, she semeth to iourney towardes me, and I desiere very muche to common with her. I haue met her i good time. God saue you holy churche of Rome.

The churche. Wisshe ye me to bee saued when as I within this fewe dayes haue gotten so muche saluacion and helthe by the reason of the wonderfull dygnitie that I haue receaued at themperours handes whereby I am the mother of all other churches that the helth of al the whole world dependeth vpon me? Therfore must not I receaue thys thynge of other, but communicat it to all other.

The people. Sence I vnderstode that our bysshoppe is changed by the Emperour from most reuerend to most holy and most blessed, I haue bē more troubled then euer was man, and many and sundry doubtes

doeth

doeth bere my brayne.

The churche. Shew me your doutes and I will resolue you fully in them all, for ye know right wel that there is nothynge to be douted of myne answere, I am now made blameles so that I can no more erre.

The People. Tell me in good faithe, had ye neuer a begynninge.

The churche. Yes without question.

The people. And who was youre mother that conceaued you.

The churche. The churche of Hierusalem, as it was forspoke̅ by Esay the prophet. The lawe came out of Sion, and euen so the worde of god from Hierusalem. Therfore when Christ ascended into heuen ther remayned none other churche in earthe besides the churche of Hierusalem, and she by the ministery of thapostles begat all other churches.

The people. Yf the churche of Hierusalem bee youre mother (as ye confesse her to be) howe then cōmeth it to passe now that the self same mother is made youre doughter?

The churche. O immortall god what a grosse phylosopher ye seme to be? For euen as ye knowe ryght well that the selfsame virgin Mary is both the mother and doughter of Christe, euen so am I my selfe the doughter of the church of Hierusalem, & also the mother of her and all other churches.

The people. O how blynde was I, now I perceaue howe the matter standeth. As the byrgyne Mary is the carnall mother of Christ, & also Christes doughter spiritually, so be you where as in tymes passe ye were the spirituall doughter of the church of Hierusalem, within this fewe daies ye are made the carnal

mother of thesame churche and al other. Nowe then seinge ye be the carnal mother of al churches, ye shal as a carnal body be shortly infected, & so infected that in short time ye shall deprave & destroy w̄ youre poison, rottennes, slander, and corrupcio̅ al other churches as well as your selfe. And when they all be once poysened as ye bee, ye shall beget them to hell, as in tymes paste the churche of Hierusalem your spirituall mother begat you to Christe. Suerly I marvayled howe ye could otherwise regenerat the church of Christe (whiche is governed with the spirite of god els is it not the churche of Christe) excepte ye gave vnto it the spirite of the devill, for there is but onlye one holye spirite whiche continueth for ever.

The church. I will be theyr spirituall mother, and as a spiritual mother I wil comfort them, give sucke to them and norysshe them to Christe.

The people. Nay ye will suck al the blude from thē, and if ye fortune to gyve thē suck, it shalbe with the mylke of adulacion and flattery.

The churche. I will make all churches riche.

The people. Yea wys with iubileis, pardons, and blissinges.

The churche. I wyll defende suche as flye to me for succour when they be oppressed with other.

The people. Ye will defende them in dede be it right or wrong if they bryng money.

The churche. If ther arise any dout in matters of religion I will open it by and by.

The people. With your owne iudgement agaynste the worde of god.

The churche. I will also punnish them that will not obeye

obeye.

The people. Ye mary with your wicked decrees and decretalles, and that with fyer, wherunto ye wyll committe them whiche confesse the wholsome doctrine of the gospell whiche is quite contrary to your doctrine. I denie not but ye may be so highe aboue other churches in spirite, in faythe and good workes, and somuche profyt them with youre good example and learnyng, that ye maye worthely be called theyr mother and superiour: but I am afraide leste altogether chaunce cleane contrary, and that there was neuer tyraunt so cruell towardes hys subiectes, as you wilbe towardes youre doughters, and therfore not worthy to be accounted or called theyr mother.

The church. Be it that I were as wycked as might be possible, yet shall I allwayes be theyr mother, for that one prerogatiue the Emperour hymselfe hathe gyuen vnto me.

The People. And what power I pray you hath themperor to make you mother of other churches if they agre not amongest thēselues therunto, but be al vtterly agaynst it: namely the churches of the Easte, in coūtreyes where themperour hath no power nor dominion: it muste nedes bee therfore that ye confesse themperoure hathe the chefe authorytie in spirituall matters, and euen as he gaue you this dignity wrōgfully, so may he lawfully take thesame away agayne from you.

The churche. Naye that wyll I neuer graunte were it neuer so trewe. Fayne I would haue you perswaded in this poynt, euen as the mother after she hathe conceaued and brought forth a childe, she is alwayes the childes mother, be she neuer so euell, neither can

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the Emperour cause her leaue of to bee a mother, or make her not to haue had a chylde whome she hathe brought forthe, because that thinge is once done and past: of a lyke sorte, after that I am once made the mother of al other churches, & that by Themperors authorite, Themperour can not bring it to passe with al the power he hath that I shal not be euermore the mother of them whome I haue begotten.

The people. And howe may it bee that you haue begotten al churches, when it is euident that ther was a great number before you, yea and that you wer begotten of other.

The churche. O braynles head. knowest thou not that when Christ honge vpon the crosse and shewed John to hys mother, and sayed: woman beholde thy sonne, forthwith he was made her trewe and naturall sonne: so that after those wordes once pronounced it shall be alwayes trewe that John was borne of her: Now of the same fashion, when the Emperor sheweth vnto me all churches and saythe: behold thy doughters, by & by am I made theyr trew lawfull & naturall mother. And then began thys sentence fyrst to be trewe that they were all borne of me, and therfore canne it not bee but that I begat them, and am theyr mother for euer.

John. xix. Nota.

The people. Christe by thys worde mynded to declare nothynge els to his mother but that she should from thence forward take John in stede of her sõne, and that he should take Mary in stede of his mother, as he alwayes dyd, but his mynde was not that she shoulde be Johns naturall mother as she was that conceaued and bare him.

The churche. Loe nowe ye come in with your tropes and

and figures: the wordes of Christe are simply to bee vnderstanded. Christ sayd to hys mother: behold thy sonne, and he sayd to John, beholde thy mother: so that it folowethe wel, Mary was Johns very trew mother, and John was Maries very trewe sonne, but howe this thinge may be it behoueth vs not curiosly to serche. Of a lyke fashion the wordes, which Christe spake at hys last supper when he there ministred to his disciples taking breade into his handes, and deliuerynge it broken to them, that sat with him sayinge: this is my body, be semply and plainly to be vnderstanded: that is to say, that the bread is the very body of Christe, and not the breade is a figure of the body of Christ, of the very same fashion the Emperours wordes muste be taken when he shewed me all churches sayinge: behold thy doughters, these wordes must be vnderstanded plainly as they stand: wherfore I conclude that they be my trewe lawfull doughtets, and I am theyr mother.

The people. What? when you neuer begat them? I neither knewe, nether cold beleue that the Emperoure had euer any such authority, that he could make that thig to be done, which was neuer done in this world, that is to say, that he could make you brig forth those churches which ye neuer brought forth. Yf the emperour haue so greate power that he canne make those thinges to haue ben whiche were neuer, no doubt he can bring to passe also that those thinges were neuer which haue ben, and so may he cause also, that ye neuer wer, neither euer shalbe theyr mother. I woulde very fayne that ye coulde perswad the same thinge, which ye tolde me, to your monkes and prestes: that is, that the wordes of Christ are simply to be vnderstāded without any trope or figure, as this other sai-

ing of Christ is: some there be, whiche haue geldyd thē̄selues for the kingedō of god, for takinge it plainly they would gelde themselues, and let my women alone vndefiled, neither would they be stayned with so much wicked filthines, which thynge they should more willynglye do, for that they so frowardlye defend that they will take no wyues. To possesse thynges not nedefull appereth to me not only superfluose, but also folysche. Thys woulde I lerne of you, when themperour sayed vnto you: beholde thy doughters, what thig was it ỹ he shewed vnto you.

The churche. All churches.

The people. The churches of Christ, or the churches of the Deuell?

The curche. I am indifferent.

The people. If it be as you saye, I thynke he shewed vnto you the churches of Satan. As touchynge my parte I dare boldly saye there is no cause why I should reioyse in this dignitie but rather lament: for whereas before I was your onelye sonne and heyre, now when ye haue a meany of doughters, & ye must giue to euery one of thē theyr dowery, so that I shal remayne a beggar.

The church. Naye thou shalt bee rychest of all other, knowe ye not the fashion of the turkes, which selleth theyr doughters for a certaine sūme of money to thē, that shalbe theyr husbandes? so will I sell my churches and bysshoprikes to them, that will giue moste money, and so shall the spoyle of all other prouinces come immediatly to Rome.

The people. Then will ye commit simonie, and noryshe a den of theues?

The churche. I tolde thee afore that I can not erre, and

and so must thou beleue if thou wilt be accounted my sonne, yea although thou sawest me commit dayly all kindes of abhominacion.

The peo. This cānot be except I lose my fiue wittes.

The churche Naye I woulde ye shoulde not onelye be persuadyd that I cannot erre, but also that I am most holy, & ought to be called most holy after such a sort, that he, which nameth me holy & not most holy, is to be thought not to speake of me.

The people. Then when the Apostles in the Crede saye: we muste beleue one holy churche, wee must not thynke that sayng to belong to you. But I heard say not longe agone a thynge more to bee wondered at, that our Byshop is made most holy of all, and moste blissed of all other a goddes name.

The churche Thou hittest the nayle on the head.

The people Then as concerning holynes he shalbe superior to Christ, who by the authoritie of scripture is named holy of holies: but this good blode of ours is called by the mouthes of mē most holy. Therefore should he not desire to come into heauē. For be it that he were there euen nowe, more then blissed should he not be: and being in yearth he is accountyd most blissed. Wherfore he should not ascende to a higher state of felicitie but rather descende to a lower. And it is maruayle yf thangelles and Saynctes, whiche be in heauen, come not with spede to Rome, and there begynne to sue for thys dignitie of the Byshopryke of Rome, that they may be made more blissed and more holy then they nowe be. I heard more ouer that he is declared the head of all other churches.

Thechurch. So it is in dede.

The people. Had not then the mistical bodye of the churche a head before nowe? Yf it were so it myght

well be accounted monster lyke. And I meruayle very muche howe it coulde lyue.

The churche. Oh, Chriſte was the head.

The people. Then the Emperour hath taken away Chriſt, and put our Byſhop in hys place.

The churche. Nay not ſo: but he hathe ioyned thys head to the churche, and yet doeth Chriſt remayne.

The people. That talke is moze ſhamefull. Was not Chriſte hable to gouerne his church as an vniuerſal head? In the beginninge of the primatiue churche & a lytle whyle after, the churche of Chriſte dyd florith very muche, and was wonderfully replenished, and yet had it none other head but Chriſte. He onely as a true head dyd gouerne it, and that excedinglye well by the inſtrumentes of hys miniſters. Haue it come to paſſe at any tyme that Chriſte beinge weried with his painfull gouernaunce woulde nowe reſt him? ſo that he nowe hath committed it to themperours diſcrecion to apoynt ſome ſuffragan, and helper in hys ſtede? oz els truely is he muche diſpleaſed with hys churche, and loueth it no moze, neither regardeth the gouernaunce therof, but withdzaweth his ſpirite frō it, and ſo ſhall he be a lyar in that he ſayth: I am with you to ꝑ worldes ende. Furthermoze, themperoz as it
Math. 28. apereth is moze carefull foz the church of Chriſt then god him ſelfe. Foz when god withdzewe Chriſt from his churche, themperour hathe prouided it another head. But accozdinge to the doctrine of Paule we be not ignozaūt ꝯ the militant congregaciō of Chriſte is as one body whoſe head is, was, & euer ſhalbe Chriſt himſelfe. He as the only & trewe head hath gouerned it hetherto ſyngularly well, and will alſo gouerne it
vntyll the latter daye of iudgement, and euen vntill

ſuche

ſuche tyme as he hath ſubdued hys enemies and put them vnder hys feete. Thynke ye that chriſtian men be ſuche buſſards that they wyll beleue Chriſte and hys ſpirite to be taken awaye vp into heauen as into a place apoynted for hys maieſtie: and is there conteyned as a triumphinge head of the triumphaunte churche? And for that cauſe the Emperoure hathe apoynted another head of the churche militant in the ſtede of him, that is abſēt? Yf it be ſo, ye muſt of force graunt, that theſelfe ſame head, for aſmuche as it is deſtitute of the ſpirite of Chriſte, hathe the ſpirite of the deuyll, & ſo ſhall it be a deueliche head. And yf the churche militant ſhall from hence forthe haue two heades, ſurely it ſhall bee a thynge lyke a monſter. Neither canne I perceyue by coniecture howe two headdes being equall in power, and moſt contrary in condicion, maye quietly and ſafely liue together, and gouerne at one tyme one ſpeciall charge. Verely it is to be feared, (ſo wonderfull is the pryde of oure Byſhop bred by the bone) that he wyll dryue Chriſte out of dores from hys owne kyngdome. But peraduenture thys thyng is trewe: yf oure Byſhoppe be once made ſupreme head of the churche militant, by the meanes wherof he maye be eſteemed aboue Chriſte: it maye ſo be that he wyll ſuffer after a ſorte, that at the leſt wayes he maye vſe hys ſeruice as he were a ſlaue. But I canne neuer bee perſuadyd that he wyll ſuffer hymſelfe by anye meane to be taken for an vnderlyng to Chriſt.

The curche. Thynke not that his power hath anye ende. For euen as all power in heauen and in yearthe is geuen vnto Chriſte, ſo is it like wiſe geuen to him.

The people. Yea, and further alſo both in purgatory

and in hel. But speake no more of his power for surely he wyll take more vpon hym then I woulde wish. Another doubt I haue wherunto I would haue you answere me, yf ye can. Shall he be a common head to all other churches?

The churche. Yea verelie.

The people. Of late I learned of them that bee sene in logike, that perticuler menne bee those, whiche laboure and doe any thynge, but manne that is commen and generall to all men doeth nothyng. Then yf he be a commen man he shall neither see, heare, perceyue, nor vnderstande, and so shall he bee nothynge elles but a very blocke or image.

The churche. But thou thyselfe shalte well perceyue, that he can see, heare, perceyue, and worke.

The people. I beleue it forsoth that he wyl swalow vp largely, yea the riches of other churches. But tel me howe that maye be? That he maye worke beynge a man that is commen to all men.

The churche. He shalbe a perticuler man also.

The people. Whye then shall he not be one onelye, but he shalbe two. O what a foole am I, and howe dull witted. Nowe loe I leue wondrynge. For as I heare say, as sone as he is made Pope he speaketh no more in the singular number but in the plurall: so ỹ he doeth no more saye: this I wil doe, or say, as they were wont in times past whē they wer but one man: but now he sayeth: we wyll doe, and we will say, because that nowe he is made a double man. I am also resolued nowe in another doubt, wherof I shoulde neuer haue ben answered yf ye had not made me perceyue it.

The churche. What doubt is that?

The

The people. I haue heard many tymes saye that after he is created Pope, he can not erre as the Pope, but yet he maye many tymes as a man erre.

The churche That is very trewe.

The people. Nowe I am sure of thys trueth, that as he is Pope and a common man, he can not worke any thyng, neither erre.

The churche. Nay as he is Pope he worketh wonders, & can not erre because of the holy goste which is assistant vnto hym.

The People. Then by your sayng he can not be at one tyme a Pope and a man, for thē myght he at one time erre and not erre. He myght erre as a manne, and not erre as the Pope. Therfore at some tyme must he be a Pope and no man, and then can he not erre. But yet can I not well perceaue what monstrous beaste thys may be which is a Pope and no man, and agayne an other time a man & no Pope. And I merueyle wonderfully, that they will robbe the Popeshipe so much of so great a dignitie, and so to leaue him a bare man. Nowe beit I beleue in dede, (althoughe of an other sort,) that no Pope can erre, because that Christ euer hathe bene, and euer shalbe the very onely and true head of hys churche, neuer shall there bee anye other Pope, or head of Christes churche.

The church. I dare not affirme that our Bysshoppes can neuer be heretikes.

The people. Peraduenture some haue bene.

The churche. If any suche thyng chaunce, in that he is an heretike, he ceases to be Pope. Yet is this thyng trewe that ye must obey hym, and alowe him so long for Pope vntyll he bee iudged and condemned for an heretike, and be deposed from hys Popshipe by the

authoritie.

authoryte of a generall counsell.

The people. So that if he cõpel me to his wickednes, and commaunde me to beleue his heresies before he be deposed of hys popshipe, I must obey by youre iudgemẽt. Surely it is handsomly counselled of you.

The churche. Thou must obey him in thinges rightfull & honest, & not in thynges that be wicked, euen as ye would doe, if a man woulde force you to beleue an heresie.

The people, Euen nowe ye sayed he coulde not erre as he was Pope: but he as Pope commaũdeth me to assent to hys wycked opinions, and by youre mynde I must alowe him for Pope, vntyll he be deposed by thauthoritie of a lawefull counsell. Wherfore it folowteh that I am bounde to obey hym, and to be an heretike as he is.

The churche. Thou shalte not trust hym in heresie & wicked doctrine, though he would cõmaund them to you a thousand tymes.

The people. And howe shall I knowe when he fauoreth and teacheth a wicked doctrine: for by youre sayinge I muste beleue that he can not erre, because that whatsoeuer he appoynteth me to beleue, I must determine it to be wholsome doctrine and infected with no dregges of wickednes. So ỹ in thys poynte I shall not folowe the iudgement of myne owne reason. And yf I shoulde apoynt the worde of God to be iudge, by youre doctrine I shall not vnderstande it, but after the Popes pleasure and exposicion. And yf the Pope write the scriptures wickedly, & expound them frowardly, as he is wont, and by that means frame some heresies, which he will giue me, that am ignorant, to beleue: shall I be bounde to receaue and honour

honour them as Articles of my fayth: for he must be as it were my refuge & succour, and a continual guyd & rule to declare holy scriptures. Yea, yf the generall counsell woulde declare him to be a wicked man, and worthye to be deposed from hys office, yet ought I to alow hym as Pope at the lest waye s vntyll suche tyme as he hathe declared the general counsell to be lawfully gathered, and that he was iustly condempned in that counsell. But I aske of you: is the Pope aboue the counsell, or beneth, or equal?

The churche. Aboue.

The peo. Then hath he alone more knowledge and inspiracion then the whole counsell. And therfore beit that the cõsell lawfully assembled had cõdempned his doctrine for heresie, yet ought I rather beleue him then the whole counsell, forasmuch as he is aboue them and more indewed with supernaturall light then they be. But tel me this one thing: ye sayd euẽ now, if ỹ Pope were an heretike, yet ought I to receaue him as Pope vntil such time as he were deposed by thautorite of a counsell. Now this questiõ I demaũd of you: yf it should chaũce the Pope to be an heretike, and yet not so declared by the counsell, whether were he in dede Pope or no?

The churche. Yf suche a thing should chaunce, I durst not affirme him to be Pope. For thẽ should he erre in dede, & that in matters of the faith, & that as pope, but I sayd euen now that he could not erre as pope, although he erred as a man.

The people. Why then should he no more be pope.

The churche, Noe truly.

The people. And how or whẽ dyd he lose his popeship?

The church. In that he is an heretike.

The people. Yf the matter be as you say there shalbe very fewe trewe Popes, no none at all. For a man can not be a Pope, except he be an heretike, yf he were in no point els, yet should he be in thys, that he must beleue the Pope to bee the supreme head of the church of Christe. But let vs graunt (although it be not so) that a mã may be a Pope in dede, and yet no heretike. When I am not assertayned, whether he erre in hys mynde or not, in matter that belongeth to our fayth, I shalbe alwayes in a dout whether he be the trewe Pope or not, and therfore shal I also be in dout whether I shall credit his wordes or not, and so shall I be alwayes doutfull in my faith.

The church. He is alwaies Pope although he be an heretike in hys harte, if it so bee that he disclose not him selfe to be suche a one.

The people. What if he disclose himselfe to be an heretike to some other man and not to me.

The church. Trewly then should he no more be Pope.

The people. Then forasmoche as I knowe not whether he haue at any tyme declared hymselfe to be an heretike or not, I shall haue his doctrine alwayes in a ielosye and suspicion neyther shall I knowe certaynly that he is Pope and canne not erre, because I shall neuer knowe certaynly whether he haue disclosed hym selfe to some man to be an heretike or not.

The church. This shalbe enoughe for the, to thynke him to be alwayes a Pope to the, so longe as he hath not declared himselfe to the to be an heretike. But to suche as he declareth hym selfe to be an heretike, to them he is Pope no more in dede.

The people. Thẽ if he declare him selfe an heretike to other men, and not to me, he shoulde be a Pope to me,

and

and not to other.

The church. It is euen so as ye say.

The People But my desier is very much to know whether he be then a Pope in him selfe or not. Ye can not by any means proue him to be Pope and not Pope, all at once. For if such a worde shoulde escape youre mouthe ye should perceaue playnly that ye spake contradiction. Neither can ye affirme that he is pope. For where as he did erre before other, yea and that in the doctrine of saluacion, than you must nedes graūt that he erreth, as Pope, whiche thinge before you sayed coulde not be. Therfore ye bee forced to graunt that he is not Pope. But I which shall neuer haue knowledge whether he hathe declared to other himselfe to be an heretike or not, shalbe in a coutinuall doutinge whether he be truly pope or not, & so whether he can erre or not, of the whiche thinge there aryseth a certayne trembling in my conscience, so that I shall neuer bee certayne and suer of the veritie and truethe of his doctrine. And so muche the more shall I dout, be it that he declared himselfe an heretike to me, because I can worse descerne the trewe doctrine from the false and worse iudge whether his opinions bee hereticall or not, namely because his worde must bee the fyrst and chefe rule of my faythe. But let vs now make an end of our disputacions because the tyme is spent, and I must go to themperour, before whom I will powre out my complaynctes agaynst many ydel varlettes who after they perceaued the greatnes of our bishope they rūne to Rome in sholes, to get some offices and benefices at his handes, and few there be that bringe not theyr trulles with them, and suche as do not, fal on woyng at Rome. But it wer a heuy

thing for me if Rome shoulde be turned into Troy.

The curche. Besides this noble dignitie of our bychop, I am to muche occupied with an infinite number of matters, of ceremonies, of sutes, and controuersies, & of other prophane thiges, that I haue no time left to scratch my head. wherfore now wil I forsake you. But I wyll tel you one thyng yet before I goe. Sence this man was created pope I haue ben wonderfully vexed and sicke bothe in body and soule, euen as though I had dronke a pocion of poyson. And I canne not well tell whether I gat thys sycknes of to muche ioy wherewith I was replenyshed by the reason of the greatnes of my promocion, or elles of thintollerable burden of businesses which grow towardes me dayly. Nowe haue I nothinge elles to saye, but that I offer my newe kindes of marchandise to bee solde to you before other, and that better chepe than ary straunger shall haue them.

The people. I thanke you for youre marchant lyke ciuilitie, and agayne I offer vnto you my fauor, and all my strength, and power to defend and increase the greatnes of your honour.

The Pope.
Mans Judgement.
The people of Rome.

The pope. AT the last we be come to thys highe honor, whiche we haue so much desired (and that is more to bee wondered at) by the whole consent of all the people of Rome. I would neuer haue thought suche a numbre of the nobilitie woulde haue come to gratifie me and to increase my ioye. They thynke verely that thys oure promocion shal

shall increase and amplifie their ryches, and power not a litle. But I am informed for a certayntie that many foren churches were muche vexed therwith, namelye suche as bee of the East partes. Wherfore we vnderstande that they sende embassadors (what they bee I can not tell) to replye agaynst the thynge, and it maye so be, that they wyll dryue the matter to a disputation. Now is it therfore necessarie for vs to arme our selues for oure defence, and as in a matter of great weyghte, and importaunce, to vse a wittie counsell. Wherfore mans iudgement (who art one of my pryuye counsell) with thee I thynke it best to consult.

Mans iudge. Truely sir I haue tossed & turned al this matter in my minde agayne and agayne, & after long and earnest fantasyinge, I conclude that there is no more presente remedie, to preserue, increase, and establish thys your promotion, kingdom, and authoritie, then to contend, and earnestly to stand in it, that it is not the ordinaunce of man but of God. So that it is Christ hymself, who hath ordeined you to be supreme head of the churche, and that with a whole fulnes of power: otherwyse shall ye hange alwayes vpon the Emperour, who hath placed you in this highe estate of honoure, & by that meanes as he once gaue it you, so maye he agayne take it awaye from you.

Moreouer your Empier and authoritie cannot be stretched out further then the coastes of the Empier of Rome extendith, besydes thys all Christendō wyll laugh to scorne thys fayned, and conterfect dominion. Trying out that Christe is the supreme head of his churche, and that he alone is able ynoughe to gouerne it well with out the helpe of an other head

or of any other deceyptfull manne, as he hath by hys ministers gouerned it hetherto. But yf ye contende earnestly that it is Christ who hath put you in thys place, ye shall bothe be deliuered from hanging vpon the Emperour, and shall also be as farre aboue hym as holy and spirituall matters are to be preferred to matters prophane and worldely. So that your authoritie being by thys meanes established, ye shall enter into all the coastes of the yearth. There shalbe no Christian men in the worlde, but when they shall bee persuaded that Christe was the author of thys ordinaunce (who hath made you his vicar, of whome ye haue receyued thys highe authoritie) but they wyll come to you of their owne swynge as thoughe they would worship this Godhead of yours in earth, and wyll glorye that they maye obey you.

The Pope I woulde alowe thys counsell of yours very well yf it might be brought to passe by any meanes that I coulde persuade so manifest a vanitie to the worlde,

Mans iudge. The folishenes of manne is growen so farre nowe, accompanied with a wonderfull deceyt and wickednes, & I of my selfe am so subtile & craftie, that me thynketh it a thyng easie to persuade, yea and that I nowe see the meanes howe.

The Pope. I desire of all loues, that ye wyll tell me by some inkeling what thyng it is that ye euen nowe mused vpon, for ye may well know, that it is my ioy to talke of suche thynges.

Mans iudge. Yf there coulde bee one iote founde in the holy scripture, wherupon wee myght leane for a prefe that Paule the Apostle was ordeyned of God to bee supreme and vniuersall head of the churche militant

militant, yea thoughe it semed writhed and wrasted with the braakes of your authoritie, and drawen by violence to our purpose agaynst the naturall sence, & yet so that there were some likelyhod therin: the victorye were ours. For it is euident by the worde of god that Paule was some tyme at Rome, & thoughe he were then in prison, yet shall wee persuade by all meanes possible that he was made Bysshop of thys Citie, whose office and dignitie you haue by inheritaunce and succession obteyned. I haue occupied my fantasie to and fro, and haue shewed thys question diligently, and so at the last I perceyue that there be many wordes in the holy scripture, whiche with a litle wrasting woulde make the blinde ignoraunt common people gyue credite to thys vayne opinion: that Paule was the chiefe of all the Apostles, and vniuersall head of all the churches of Christe. And yet shall we not therfore obteyne all our purpose. For the selfe same holy scripture is in other places directlye and in playne wordes againste vs. Forasmuche as it is euident that Paule thapostle was none of the twelue Apostles of Christ: yea and when Christ was here in earthe, he was his enemie and persecutor, and afterwarde also a certayne space. Neither is it lykelye that Christ woulde ascende into heauen, but woulde first well forsee to his churche, and leaue vnto it one certayne head to be hys vicar & occupie hys rowme. Thys thyng was very necessary for him to doe. This last reason must we alleage earnestly, and defende it stoutly, yf we intende to obtayne oure purpose. But nowe haue I deuised a farre better waye. There bee many places in the gospell whiche may easly be writhed to oure purpose. That is to saye, wherby some

lykelihod

likelyhod maye be alleged, that Peter thapostle was pronounced chiefe of the apostles by Christ his owne mouth, and was created supreme head of his church militant. Nowe yf we coulde bring hym to Rome, & make hym Bychop of thys citie, it shall bee an easie thing to persuad that you be his successor, and so shal we obteyne all our purpose.

The Pope. Will ye attempt to bringe Peter nowe to Rome: and he died so many yeres agone? This thing me thinketh cannot be.

Mans iudge. In case I shoulde reyse hym vp from deathe and bryng hym to Rome, and so in conclusion make hym Bychop of this citie, what woulde ye say?

The Pope. Mary I woulde withstand it with tothe & nayle. Neither canst thou make him Bishop of thys citie, but thou shalt bereue me of thys my dignitie.

Mans iudge Yf I shoulde make hym Bychop, and yet robbe not you of youre honour, but rather establishe you, and make you his successor, shoulde it not please you?

The Pope. Yes wonderfully. But I see not how that may be brought about.

Mans iudge. I haue written certayne epistles in the name of those christian men whiche were at Rome in the time of the beginning of the church, wherin there is oft mencion made of Peter as thoughe he had bene at Rome, and not onely Bychop of thys citie, but also Pope, and vniuersall head of all the churche militant, as though sundry constitucions had bene then by him made. And bycause ye shall prayse my wit the more I wrot all thys gere in so wonderfull olde bokes, that for age they coulde scarsly hange together. There is no man that seeth them but they wil iudge, they

they were written a thousand yeres agone or more. Lette vs make the people beleue that these bokes be newly found by chaunce in some olde rotten library, and so when thys rumor shal once be blowen abrode, the common people will straycht beleue that Peter was at Rome. If ther were none other cause, yet that he came for religions sake, on pilgremage to saynctes reliques, and to receyue the iubilie and ful pardō.

The Pope. Yet is not all thys ynough. For be it that he were at Rome, that not withstandinge he departed after he had receyued the iubilye, and toke his Popeship away with hym, and so shall we no longer be his successors. Therfore is it nedefull that as ye haue brought hym to Rome, and haue made him Pope, so ye cause hym also to dye at Rome.

Mans iudge Abyde a whyle, thys is the thing I went about: I haue done this thing already. And for a confirmacion of the whole matter, I gat me an olde scul bone of a dead carcas, into ywhich I dyd put a paper whiche had these wordes contayned in it. Thys is the head of Saynct Peter the firste Pope of Rome. Moreouer I haue compassed this head about with an other head of siluer, and haue so framed it with a great bearde, that it appeareth verely to be Saynct Peters head. And I doubt not but that thys fayned matter maye be easly persuaded to the people, yf it be published abrode by your authoritie.

The Pop. We must of necessitie graunt that Peter was crucified vpon a crosse, for so dyd Christ prophecie of hym, nowe, it is well knowen that it was the vse of the Iewes and not of the Romans to hange menne vpon the crosse. Wherfore I see not howe the people wyll beleue that Peter was kylled at Rome, John. xxi.

and put vpon the crosse by the Romans.

Mans iudge Tushe, men will not be so curious in other mens matters, to searche euery poynt of them so narowely. And agayne, we shall haue a sure staffe to leane to, whereunto we may alwayes resorte. We will say that god wold haue it so, that Christes wordes mought bee fulfillyd. Who can proue the contrary? Besydes this I haue many remedies, & meanes how to preserue, increase, and establishe you in thys highe honour, as ye shal see by experience, neither will I let any good occasion ouerslyp, that may be to your furtheraūce. Be it that there come Embassadours to the citie of Rome: I alone wyll aunswere them all as they ought to be aunswered. In the meane space shall you begyn a litle and litle to publishe, abrode that it is Christ, who hath made you Pope, and that ye be the successor of Peter the high Bishop of Rome.

The Pope. But what will then the Emperour say, when he shall perceyue that we noyse it abrode that it was Christe, and not he, whiche made me Pope?

Mans iudge. Our aunswere shal bee that ye were declared and confirmed the chiefe Bishoppe by themperours maiestie, but yet that it was Christ, who hath placed you in so highe a seat, euen as he did youre predecessors before you. But loe one whom ye sawe not, a gentle man called the people of Rome, I thinke he cōmeth to see you, and to do hys dewtie. I praye you offer hym youre fote to kysse, that ye maye so begyn to bring that thyng into a laudable custome.

The people. And euen for the same very purpose, haue I caused a redde crosse to be made on the ouer parte of my fote.

Mans iudge. Although many thinke that to be done

of

of you in despite of the crosse, yet is it iustly and well done to sette the crosse in the lowest place, yea and Christ hymselfe also, that your glory may be auaunced to a most hyghe state. Namely for that we know the crosse of Christe alwaye to be hated of the wyse men of thys worlde. And to saye the truethe, it had ben more mete for you to haue caused the crosse to be set vnder the sole of your fote, if it had not bene paynfull for you to lyft vp youre fote so oft to all suche as woulde kysse it. But I wyll withdrawe my selfe for a tyme, that you maye comon alone at your pleasure with thys sonne of yours.

The people of. Oh happie and blissed am I, sence I haue thus muche fauoure shewed me, that I maye be suffered to come, and kysse these holye and blyssed feete.

The pope. In consideracion that thys benefit maye be the more esteemed, we graūt to you out of the treasure of Peter & Paule and other holy Apostles and Sayncte for tie tymes for tie dayes of pardon.

The people. A goodly reward, and we thanke you highly, we thanke you I say as speakyng to many whiche be most holy and most blissed Popes.

The Pope What meanest thou by that? That thou didest call vs most blissed and most holy Popes in the plurall numbre, thinkest thou that we be many Popes? Seest thou not vs onely placed in this dignitie?

The people. Pardon thou me I beseche the moste holy and blissed father. When I herde the speake in the plurell numbre, I thoughte that there had bene two Popes at the least.

The Pope. Doest not thou perceyue thy selfe to speake vnreuerentlye, thou sayest pardon thou me-

vnderstandest thou not that thou shouldest of nurtor, and dewe reuerence speake to vs in the plurell numbre. And that because he worketh continually in vs, who first auaūced vs to this high dignitie, for we be not alone in worcking. Otherwise whē thou shouldest speake by name to vs, thou oughtest to speake in the singular number, and that because oure parson and dignitie is but one.

The People. I beseche youre holynes to pardon me, because I am not yet acquainted with these kides of ceremonies. Ye haue heard I thinke of the number of Embassadours whiche bee sent from soundry partes of the worlde, of whome a great company be come to Rome alredy.

The Pope. For what purpose saye they that they bee come?

The people. To replie against you, being offēded with this high honour that the Emperour hath geuē you.

The Pope We haue receyued thys popehyppe of Christ, and not of the Emperour.

The people. Truely I herde say it was geuen you of the Emperour.

The Pope. And who tolde the so?

The people. Your churche of Rome, of whom I perceyued of late in communicacion, that it was geuen you of Cesars maiestie.

The Pope. As concerninge thys matter, she is not aduised what she sayeth.

The people. And she sayth plainly that she cannot erre.

The Pope. Trueth in dede, no more can she, when she is informed and instructed of me. Ye know right well accordinge to the doctrine of Paule that a woman must bee subiect to her husbande, and so farre

1. Cor. vii. and. xi. Ephe. v.

for the

forth she speaketh well, as she receyuethe knowlege of him: of the same fashion the churche of Rome speaketh well, and erreth not, so farre forth as she receyueth instruccions and knowledge of me: for she is my spouse, and therfore is she my wyfe.

The people. Why how the, doth she not acknowledge Christ to be her spouse.

The Po. Yes truely she is both Christes spouse & mine.

The people. This is the first tyme that euer I heard that one woman maye haue two husbandes. I haue herde of sundry menne that hath had many wynes, but I neuer herde of one woman that hath had manye husbandes. But let thys passe, and let vs retorne agayne to our former talke. And most humblye thys one thyng I beseche your holines it wyll voucheſafe to tell me: Howe hathe your holines obteyned thys hygh Bysshoprike at Christes hande.

The Pope. we will tell the. Christ beinge ỹ head of the church ordeyned Peter before he ascendyd into heauen to be his vicar and succeſſor. And because he cam to Rome and brought his high Popeship with hym, and dieng there hathe left the same to his succeſſors, that is to say to ỹ other Bishoppes of Rome in order: we nowe beinge Bysshope of Rome haue receyued of Christ by succeſſion and inheritaunce this high Pontificall dignitie power and authoritie.

The people. I heare newes now that I neuer herd before: Namely thys that Peter was euer at Rome. I am of an excedinge great age (as ye see) & haue dwelled in Rome in Peters daies. And so desireful I was to heare newes, that yf euer he had come to Rome no doubt I woulde haue sene hym, and it had bene for none other cause, yet truely woulde I so haue done

for his worthye names sake, wherwith he filled one Citie, neyther woulde I haue suffered the remembraunce of hym to haue decayed, euen as I haue diligently preserued vntyll thys daye fresh, the remembraunce of Paule. No man can either thinke, or shewe what tyme he was here, and I absent. For I neuer went out of thys citie.

The Pope. All the tyme whyles he was here, for the moste parte he was in prison, and therfore is it no mernayle thoughe thou sawest hym not.

The people. I haue bene alwayes and am tyll thys daye exceding quisitiue, and curious in searchynge of newes. My studie is to knowe what is done euerywhere, I range and wander euen to the very prisõs. It is not possible that suche a manne shoulde at anye tyme haue come to Rome, and haue bene cast in prison for the gospelles sake, but I shoulde haue hearde of it. Howebit I not onely neuer sawe hym, but more ouer I neuer hearde of any man liuyng that euer he was at Rome, sauing euen nowe of your holynes.

The Pope. Yt maye so bee, that whyles he was at Rome he laye hyd in some corner.

The people. Howe then preached he the gospel here, by thoccasion wherof he was cast in prison, and at the last hanged vpon the crosse. Beslydes thys, if he were Byshope of Rome, howe was he chosen to that dignitie yf he were not knowen whyles he remayned in Rome.

The pope. Marke well thys thyng that I shall say vnto thee. Thou must be circumspect and wise, when it shall chaunce the to reason of thys matter. For the daye maye come, when we shall call the forthe to bee a wytnes in it. Whyche thynge yf it happen, we wyll the

the to say that thou diddest bothe see and know him.

The people. What would ye haue me lie lustely, and so sensibly that euery manne might perceaue it?

The Pope. We absolue the of this faulte, and further we let the to witte, that we doe al these thinges of a good and holy intent, & for the glory of god. And this dare we be bold to say, that great honor & profit shall arise to the by thincreasynge of our dignitie.

The people. Yf I bee absolued of thys lye, I can not but doe for you in al other thinges, because that herby shall insewe to me a very great commoditie. But lest I should be taken with my lye, I woulde fayne knowe what I shall aunswere, when I am asked, namely of the time when Peter was at Rome.

The Pope. Thou shalt say that he dwelled at Rome still, after he came once thether vntill his dyenge day.

The people. Beinge demaunded when he came fyrst, shall I say before Paule or after?

The Pope. It is beste for the to say before Paule, lest men should haue occasion to thinke, that Paule was byshoppe of Rome before Peter.

The People. Nowe call I to remembraunce when Paules cause was first hearde here at Rome before Cesars throne, al christian mē forsoke him, as he himself wryteth in a certaine epistle ý he made to Timothie. Wherfore it must then be graunted that he was thē forsaken of Peter for feare. Which thing semeth not likely that ther should so great a fault be found in Peter, who had so earnest & feruent a zeale towards religion, and full of christian charitie, namelye after Christ ascended into heauē, and replenished him with the holy ghost. 1. Timoi. 4.

The Pope I coulde not remembre so harde a dont

as

as thys is. It is best thē to say that Peter came whē Paule was alredy examined.

The people Agayne beynge demanded whether he were chosen Bysshoppe of Rome in thys citie or not, what answere shall I make?

The Pope Mary thou shalt constantly say yea.

The people Well, then receaued he hys bysshoprik of men, and not simply & only of Christ. How thē shal it bee trewe that he was pronounced by Christe heade of all other churches?

The pope Thou vnderstādest not this matter. Peter had .ii. bishoprikes, one perticular, & another general. The chiefe ỹ is to say, ỹ general: he receaued of Christ, wherby he is bishop & head of al other churches & bishoprikes. The latter, that is to saye the perticular he receaued of men whereby he was the Bishoppe of Rome.

The people, I haue sene amongest them which professe mounkery, when they goe on theyr general visitacion of ỹ prouinces cōmitted to their charge, they will not bee so generall prouincials, that they wyll take vpon them to remoue them away whome they find, but suffer thē to remayne, and do their office, as they did before, and they also be contented with theyr office of visitacion. Of a like sorte me thinketh if Christ had ordeyned Peter a vniuersall bysshope of all other bishoppes, his deutie should be to visit all other churches, and yet to leaue euery bysshop remaynynge in his owne diocese, and he himselfe to bee contented with his owne office, and regarde nothinge to bee created bysshop of euery sundry church. But I pray you thys one thinge, was Peter a bishope before he was made bysshope of Rome and Antioche or not?

The

The pope. He was but yet a generall bysshope of the whole churche of Chriſte, and no ſeuerall biſchoppe of Rome or Antioche.

The people. Then was he called an vniuerſall Bysshop of Chriſte, and of hys churche, by the meanes wherof he was called a chriſtian bysshope, and not the biſchop of Rome.

The Pope. It is verye trewe as ye ſay.

The people, Nowe marueyle I very muche, whie after he was made bysshoppe of Rome, he refuſed the fyrſt tytle, and receaued the latter, ſeinge that hys laſt bysshopryke was no cauſe why he ſhould loſe the firſt: that not withſtandinge he woulde no more be called the chiefe Chriſtian bysshop, but the bysshop of Rome. And yet without controuerſy the fyrſte tytle is more worthy tytle then is the latter. And as for the fyrſte name and tytle he had it of Chriſte, the latter of man. Yf Peter at any tyme woulde haue receyued and allowed to bee called the chiefe chriſtian Bysshoppe, ſuerlye youre predeceſſours woulde haue vſurped and chal'enged the ſame title: Which thing becauſe it is not done, but they be called ỹ biſchoppes of Rome, many men will thinke that neither they, neyther any of theyr predeceſſors were euer vniuerſall bysshoppe of all churches. For if that had ſo been, trewely they woulde haue chaunged the perticular title with the more general and more worthye title, or at the leſte wayes youre holynes ſhou'de nowe at the laſt begyn to be called, neither the chiefe, nether the Romiſh bysshop, but a Chriſtian biſchop of Chriſt, and of his congregacion, and create ſome priuat biſchoppe of Rome in youre ſtede.

The Pope. Ye canne not perſwade vs to be ſo much a fole, that we will refuſe the byſhoprike of Rome to runne in viſitacion of churches hether & thither lyke Egiptyans. We wyll holde faſte thys byſhoprike of Rome, and further more we will be, and require ſo to be accounted, the ſupreme head of all other byſhops.

The people. As for my parte I am right well contented, and ſatiſfied how ſo euer the matter goe, neyther did I moue thys matter for any other purpoſe, but becauſe that name and title of a Chriſtian byſhoppe ſemeth to me muche more excellent, then to be called byſhope of Rome. But and it may like your holynes, was Peter the fyrſte byſhoppe of Rome?

The Pope. That is without queſtion.

The people. Suerly I marueyle muche that Paule was ſo notable an Apoſtle, and ſo muche eſteemed before Peter, and yet was not made byſhop of Rome. And another thing I merueyle at muche more, that although the churche of Chriſte was at Rome, yea and that many yeres before Paule came thether, and many wyſe and godly men were in it (as it appereth in the Epiſtle, whiche Paule wrote ſpecially to them, wher he ſaluteth them by name) yet that theyr church was ſo euell ordered, that it lacked a byſhope.

The pop. There were byſhoppes there, but Peter was not the firſt byſhop of Rome: but the firſt chiefe biſhoppe of all other, and he made an ordinance that all byſhops of Rome, which ſhould afterward folow hym, ſhould alſo be the higheſt biſhops aboue all other.

The people. Verely I cannot ſee from whence Peter had this authoritie to make ſuche an ordinance, that all biſhops of Rome ſhoulde be Popes, and vicars of Chriſt, although they were wicked helhoundes, me thinket,

thinketh it had ben done accordinge to iustice, & equitie, if any shoulde be ordeyned bysshoppe aboue all other bishops, and churches, the same, should be chosen by the consent of all bysshops, and all churches. And thys thinge is moste of all to be marueyled at, howe it may come to passe, that all your predecessors from Peter euen vntill thys day were highest bysshoppes, and heade of all churches, and yet vsed not they this authorytie: no there was neuer communicacion of it before thys presente.

The Pope. Neuer thinke that that is so, as thoughe they were not chiefe bysshoppes in very dede: but because it was not nedeful for them to vse theyr authoritie, and of a certayne modestie, they declared not themselues chiefe bishopes, as they were. But nowe there bee so manye heresies arisen in the churche of god, suche sundrye sectes, and dissencions that we haue thought it necessary, for a remedy agaynste so many mischefes, to declare oure selues, what power we haue by Christe, & so to vse oure most high authoritie.

The people. I vnderstande you well. Namelye because the chiefe bysshoppes of Rome (as I heare saye) can not erre. This one thing also can I not hyde, whiche semeth to me sumwhat: yf they haue receaued thys high authority of Christ, they ought by no meanes to kepe it secrete and hid, but to disclose it to the whole worlde, whether they vsed it or not, accordinge as the circumstances of thinges, parsons, tymes, and places shoulde requier, and that shoulde the more diligentlye haue bene done, for that it is nowe opened with a greate offence of all good and godly menne, and the worst poynt of all is, that men be not so folishe nowe a dayes, that they wyll gyue anye credyt vnto you. But I as a good child of your holines, will alwaies

shewe my selfe obedient, and redy to belene you. And because I woulde trouble youre holynes no longer with your blessed license I will departe.

The pope. And we now geue the our blyssing frely.

Thomas Mallucius the master of the horse.

Lepidus the popes chamberlayne.

Mal. YOnder I see master Lepidus commynge hastely and cherfully out of themperours courte. I will wayte vpon hym, to knowe whether he bringe vs any good tydinges. God saue you master Lepidus. Suerly you bringe vs some good newes, as a man would iudge by your countenance, ye seme so pleasant and mery.

Lepidus. I haue so much ioye trussed vp in this brest of myne, that I can scarsly staye my selfe within my skynne.

Mal. As nobell hartes of the worlde may bee esteemed so muche the more happie, the larger they spred abrode theyr happie state and felicitie. Wherfore I beseche you vouchesafe to tell me wherof this ioy of yours ariseth, that youre ioy may bee increased euen with the tellinge therof.

Lepidus. Why is it your chaunce alone not to heare of the disputacio, that hath ben in the court of Rome & of that triumph, & victory, that we haue obteined.

Mal. I knowe nothinge elles, but that the last day I heard tell of certayne Embassadours, which came from sundrye coastes of the world to Rome, whiche woulde reply with open mouthe agaynste this highe authoritie of the pope.

Lepidus. This day was ther an open and a solempne disputacion

disputacion in the presence of Cesars maiestie of thys matter, and in conclusion our men haue obteyned the highe power of the Pope.

Mas. I woulde fayne knowe what reasons they had to bringe this vnworthy matter to passe.

Lepidus. Suerly I know a greate number of them, and some of them were suche, that I dare not disclose them vnto you, onles ye promes me before to kepe them to your selfe.

Mas. Yf they be suche reasons, as may not be lawfully kept secret, ye requier in vayne to kepe counsell of them, and thoughe I swore a thousand tymes, yet ought I not to kepe it: but if I maye lawfullye and ought to kepe it secret, ye maye haue so muche credyt in me, that ye maye beleue I wyll kepe counsell without an othe, yf ye thinke me a man not worthie to be trusted, then are ye the more to blame to require an othe of me, from the whiche the Pope maye easly absolue me, by reason of the high power that he now hath, howbeit I promes you by the fayth of a Christian manne to kepe counsell, if I may doe it lawfully.

Lepidus. Forasmuche as I truste you not a litle by the reasō of our old frendshipe, I can not but disclose the whole matter vnto you. When the holines of our Lord & master herd say ỹ the most parte of the whole world was much troubled for this wōderful dignity wherunto he hath attained, and that also theyr Embassadours were come to cry out against it openly, he toke this wayes fyrste, whiche appered to make very muche for his purpose. As sone as they came to Rome, he sent vnto thē secretly goodly flaggons of ỹ best wine, that could be gotte, of Malueseye, of wine of Tribiana, of S. Johns, of Grecia, and of Corsica.

Mas. Suerly this was a goodly beginninge, that he made to the straungers, whereby to compasse, and ouercome them, and (as it were) to claspe them by the very throte.

Lepidus. He sent moreouer a goodly present, and a bewtifull of blyssinges, Pardons, Jubilies, priuileges, immunities, and very riche promesses of benefices, and of all other suche giftes, which either he now had, or els shoulde haue here after. After thys he sent vnto euery one of them cleane remission a pena et culpa. Then he absolued them of their othes, that they had made to suche as had sent them.

Mas Very well, that by the meanes therof he might more easely corrupt them.

Lepi Nay, that they bein g absolued, and set fre from their othes, myght more easely, and frely styke to the trueth. And so he caused hys seruauntes to saye vnto them, lest peraduenture men shoulde conceyue some euil opinion of them, He signified also vnto them that he was very ioyfull, when he heard of their comming to Rome, that they myght see with their owne eyes, and iudge with theyr owne knowlege, and know the whole truthe of the matter, euen as it was, so that at theyr returne home agayne into theyr contreyes they mought shine to other with the light of their knowledge, who peraduenture should other wise remayne in the darkenes of ignoraũce or of some false surmise.

Mas. And yf he were not Pope, I durst be bolde to saye, he lyed shamefullye in so sayeng. For I am sure that the comming of thimbassadors was as pleasant to hym, as though one had hurled salt into hys eyes.

Lepi. And because the disputacion of his Pontifical prerogatiue must be in the presence of Cesar, and the

Popes

Popes holynes for sundrye considerations woulde defende it to be of God, and geuen to hym by Christe, & not by themperour: he fearinge lest by this meanes the Emperours maiestie woulde be vexed, signified vnto him that he woulde prepende, and establishe the matter after thys sorte: not because he dyd not acknowledge that he had thys dignitie onely of hym, at whose commaundement he woulde alwayes bee, and recognise hym to bee hys singular patrone, and defender: but bycause he woulde deliuer hym from al suspicion, and slaunder, which many without cloking dyd obiect, as though it were very euill done of hym, whiche bestowed this honour vpon one mortal man, And lest also other Princes, takynge example of him, woulde lykewyse establishe in their dominions sundrye supreme heades, & that shoulde brede schismes, and discentions in the churche of Christ.

Mas. Oh what an asshead was he, if euer he would assent hereunto.

Lepi Assent: Yea, and praise him also, euen as though it had bene a thyng deuised by god hymselfe, and sent to hym from God. When they came to the very disputacion, themperour had a plentifull oracion, where in he exhortyd all them, that came thether to intreat vpon that matter, to peace, concorde, and vnitie. And when it came to the Popes course to speake, bycause he woulde kepe hys state, he commaunded master Hypocryt to speake in hys name, and he so handled hymselfe with conterfetyd wordes, and gesture, and went aboute wyth suche a force of eloquense to persuade them, that the Popes holynes was not moued of hym selfe to accept so hyghe a state, but rather earnestly withstode it, and yet hauinge an eye to the

glory

glorye of God, and folowynge the mouynge of the holy goſt, at lenghth he toke this heny a ſharpe croſſe of the popſhip vpon him, thys I ſaye he perſuaded in ſuche ſorte, that he had almoſte made me beleue it was trewe, ỹ he ſayed. And ſo I my ſelfe did many times aſſent to him in ỹ he ſayd, that if he could with a ſaufe conſcience leaue thys hyghe authorytye, he bothe redely, and gladlye woulde ſo doe. But that myght not bee, becauſe by that meanes he ſhoulde doe God great iniurye. But ſeynge the matter was ſo, he was ryght glad that there was at thys preſent a diſputacion appoynted of ſo greate and weyghtie a matter, whereby the truethe there of myghte bee knowen to all menne. And thus at laſt beganne the diſputacion: Where firſt aroſe the embaſſador of Conſtantinople, a very wyſe manne, and with a loud voyce ſayed before the greate audience there aſſembled, that all the churches of the vniuerſall worlde were highlye offended with thys wonderfull and wickyd primacie of the Byſhop of Rome, whyche neuer was herd of before. And that Chriſte hymſelfe was the true and onely head of hys churche in thys militant exile: euen as he is alſo the head of the triumphant churche of the heauenlye Hieruſalem, and that he neuer ordayned any other head. Wherefore it was to be thought ỹ this wicked innouacion was not of God, and in caſe it were ordeyned of god, yet could not this ſupreme honor belōg to ỹ biſhoppe of Rome. Therfore was it not onely a diuiſe of man but wicked alſo, and wrongfull, and therfore all together deuelyſhe and not to bee ſuffered. Not a thinge ordeyned of god, as all myght perceaue, that haue any iudgement, and ſo falſe it was that there coulde be anye

Thembaſſador of Conſtantinople his reaſons.

one

one worde founde in all scripture for the defense of this primacie, that there be a number of sayinges directly agaynste it. Then arose master Falsidicus, and interrupting the Embassador in his matter spake after this sorte for the popes defense. Nay in holy scripture there is not one worde contrary, but many thinges be there, which make for it. First and formost ye knowe right well that Christe saied to Peter. Thou arte Peter, & vpon this rocke wil I build my church. Nowe if Peter were made the trewe and only foundacion, not of thys or that particular churche, but of the whole vniuersall churche of Christe, by thassente and apoyntment of Christ, it must of force be graunted, that the churche was susteyned and gouerned by Peter, whiles he lyued here in earthe, and so was he the vniuersall heade of the churche, as after him Peters successors were, and be the trewe heades of the churche. Hereunto Thimbassador made aunswer. Yf ye fall a gesting in an ernest matter, it is not to bee cõmended in matters of importance. But if ye speake as ye thinke, I maruayle muche that ye bee ignorant. Is it possible ye should be in such an heresie, to thinke Peter was the heade and foundacion of the churche of Christe, that is to saye, of all the faythefull? Truly if it were so, the churche of Christe in tymes paste should haue had a very feble and weeke foundacion, and many tymes shoulde it haue fallen by reason of the feblenes of so slender a grounde. And agayne it is an extreme wickednes and playne ydolatry to attribute that to Peter, whiche apperteyneth onely to Christe. Christ is onely that proued corner, excellent, suer and stable stone, which accordinge to the prophesie of Daniell shall breake all the kingedomes of

Dani.2. Esai.xxviii. Psal.cxviii. Mat.xxi. Ephe.ii. i.Peter.ii. i.Cor.iii.b. Math.xvi.c. Math.xvi.c Marc.viii.d Luc.ix.c. John.vi.g i.Co.x.a

the worlde, and it selfe shall indure for euer a stable & stronge foundacion of the kingdome, and congregacion of Chryste. Which thynge is confyrmed not only by the testimonie of Daniell, but of Esay also, and of Dauid, and by thautoritie of Chryst himselfe. And Paule thapostle teacheth also ỹ same very doctrine, when he saiethe, that we muste bee reysed vp in thys holy buylding of the church, not vpon Peter, but vpon Chryste, the moste stronge foundacion of the prophetes, and of thapostles. The selfe same doctrine is stablished, and confirmed by the witnes of Peter. And because that a number of light fellowes might chaunce to stumble at this stone, in so much that they shoulde thinke Chryste, during the tyme of hys beinge in earthe, was the foundacion of hys church, but whē he was once lifted vp into heauen, he lefte Peter in his stede: Paule thapostle, and moste faythfull interpreter of gods heuenly will, teacheth the contrary in especiall wordes. When he sayeth: There can none other foundacion be layed for the church of Chryst besides, that is already layd, that is to saye Chryst. And if Chryste must alway be the trewe and only foundacion of his churche, it must nedes be confessed, that neuer was, or els euer shalbee any other foundacion of the churche of Chryste, and therfore none other trewe and vniuersall heade. Nowe when Peter had professed the very trewe confession of Chryste, that he was the sonne of god, and Chryste had sayed to hym, thou arte Peter, and vpon thys Rocke I wyll buylde my churche: he shewed, and declared him selfe, to bee the liuely Rocke, a strong foundacion of hys church, by the meanes whereof he began to bee called Peter, whereas before he was called Symon, and all was by the reason of his confession, and of the reue-

lacion

lacion of the heauenly father, that he cleued by faithe to Christe the strongest rocke, and foundacion of hys churche. The selfe same thinge happeneth to al those, that beleue truly in Christ which happened to Peter. For they are blessed, and haue euerlastynge lyfe, as Christ him selfe doeth witnes, and they maye be called Peters, because by the helpe of lyuely fayth they cleue to the lyuely and vnchangeable rocke, which is Christe, euen as Christian menne haue theyr name of Christe, and agaynste them, that beleue of suche a sorte, the very gates of hell shall not preuayle. Where it is to bee noted that gates were wont to bee exce- dinge strong, and suerly defensed, in the which gates iudgement in tymes paste was wont to be exercised, and therfore when oure sauior Christe nameth the gates of hell, he vnderstandeth the power, and wise- dome of hys aduersaries, or els trewelye he vnder- standeth sinne, whereby, as it were by gates, men en- ter in to hell, as thoughe he had sayed, all the power, sutteltie, false doctrine, thretninges, and flatteringes of the worlde, furnished with theyr hel, and paradise shall not preuayle agaynste hys churche. And that Christe, by this rocke, wherevpon he sayed he would buyld hys churche, did vnderstande, and meane him- selfe. S. Austen doeth write in an homely whiche he hathe wrytten vpon thys place, where he saieth. Yf Christe woulde haue layed the foundaicon of hys churche vpon Peter, trewely he woulde haue sayed: Thou arte Peter, and vpon the wyll I buylde my churche. Althoughe Chrisostome, and Theophilact doe expounde thys place as thoughe Christe woulde haue the sound profession, & sounde faithe in Christe to be vnderstanded by thys worde rocke.

i. par. xviii. b
Ma. xvi. c.

Whiche fayth maye bee called vntyll thys daye the foundacion of the churche of Christe, forasmuche as the congregacion of the chosen cleueth to Christ, the chief and true foundacion of thys churche by faythe. Nowe then because Christe is alwaye the true and onely foundacion of hys churche, and also that faythe is the thynge whereby we bee ioyned to Christe, we must of necessitie graunt that it is as false as God is true that some menue say: That Peter or some other
Gala.ii.b. Byshoppe of Rome is the foundacion of the churche of christendome. Paule writynge to the Galathians, sayth not that Peter was the foundaciō of the church of Christ, but calleth hym a piller, as he calleth also James and John makyng hym equall, but not superior. Yf there were euer anye manne that sayed, that Christ layed the foundacion of hys churche vpon Peter, yf they were of right iudgementes, they mindyd to declare nothynge elles but that it was buylded vpon the fayth of Christ, whiche fayth the chosen and electes haue, euen as Peter had.

Mus. But my beleue was alwayes that Christ was the only one who ruled, gouerned, and susteyned hys churche, neither canne I persuade to my selfe the contrarye. But that same master Falsidicus as farre as I perceyue doeth fantasie that Christe gouerned and susteyned hys churche for a season, and afterward intending to ascend into heauen, because he coulde not be at the selfe same tyme in heauen, and also susteyne and gouerne his congregacion, as though it had bene one tyred with rulynge and laboringe, left Peter in his place, and so after thē all the Bishops of Rome in ordinary succession. Howe beit yf men, and not Christ were the foundacion of the churche of christendome,

whiche

whiche dyd susteyne, and beare the same, trewlye it
shoulde haue weake and verye feble pillers to leane
vpon, and so feble, that it woulde not once, but more
then a thousand tymes haue ben ouerthrowen, name-
ly because this thing is without controuersie. When
the Bysshope of Rome is dead, there is not by and by
another chosen in his roume, but some dayes at the
least come betwen, wherin the church of Christ should
lacke a head, thoughe it neuer lacked one at any tyme
elles. Nowe maye you perceyue whether the churche
were then destroyed or not. And this dare I boldlye
saye, yf the churche of Christ shoulde leane vpon men
after thys sorte, as vpon the foundacion, hell gates
had preuayled agaynst it longe before thys tyme.
Furthermore, yf we were grounded vpon men, and
shoulde trust to them as to oure grounde worke, and
foundacion, we shoulde be all accursed, accordyng to
the sayng: Cursed be that manne whiche putteth hys
trust in manne. And then shoulde not our churche be Jere. ii.
the churche of Christ, but the Synagoge of Satan,
and Peter shoulde haue erred excedyngly, Christe
beyng lyfted vp in to the highe place of heuen, and he
lefte for the foundacion of the churche in earthe, in ȳ
he exhorteth Christian men not to buylde vpon hym,
but vpon Christe the true and suer foundacion, and
grounde worke of his churche. And this also is very mat. xvi. c.
true. Euen as Christ dyd not onely aske Peter: but marc. viii. d
all the rest of the Apostles with him, when he sayed: Luc. ix. c.
but whom saye you that I am? So also Peter made John. vi. f.
aunswere in the name of all the Apostles, or els they
al being demaũded, should euery one haue answerid
for thẽselues. But there was muche communicacion
amongest thẽ at sũdry times before, & they al cõfessed

with one accorde, that he was the sonne of God, although Judas with a lyuelye faythe beleued not so. And Christ at another time asked al his Apostles, John. vi. wyll you also depart? Peter onely in the name of the reste made answere: Thou hast the wordes of eternall life, & hiche thing is euident of the wordes, that folowe, to whom shal we goe? we knewe & beleued, longe agon, that thou art Christ the very sonne of the liuing God. Of a lyke sort he answered in the name of them all, when he spake these wordes: Thou art Christe the sonne of God. And because Peter in the name of them all confessed Christe to be the sonne of god: ye must graunt that when Christ sayd: Thou art 1. Cor. x. Peter, and vpon thys rocke will I buyld my church: that he spake not onely to Peter, but to them all, although it were in the name of Peter. As though he had sayed Peter onely is not the liuely rocke, but all suche, as folowinge hys example verelye beleue, and confesse Christ to be the sonne God, be liuely rockes, which be buylded vpon the vnchaungeable & precious Math. xxi. corner stone Christ the only foundacion of his church. But I praye you tell me in good earnest, what sayed master Falsidicus to such thinges as were obiected? Lepi. Would ye know sayed he how Christ minded by these wordes to make Peter the foundacion, and head of his church? Reade the wordes, that folow, & ye shal perceyue, that he spake to Peter, whē he sayd: To thee wyll I gyue the keyes of the kyngdome of heauen. And whatsoeuer thou shalt bynde in yearth it shall also be bound in heauen: and whatsoeuer thou loosest in yearthe, it shall be loosed in heauen. Yt is not to be thought but that Christ being most true of hys promise performed most haboūdantly ẏ, whatsoeuer

soeuer he promysed Peter.
And so muste it bee graunted, that the keyes of the kingdome of heauen were deliuered to Peter, & therfore hath he power to open, and to shit vp heauen, to whome so euer it shall please hym, and to bringe in, and dryue out, whome he shal thinke mete, as he will him selfe, so may he lose also, and bynde. And forasmoche as by the woordes of Christe Peter only had thauthority to loose, & binde, to opē, and shut heuen, it foloweth that Christ gaue authoritie ful, and whole to Peter, and ordeyned him onely to bee head of hys churche.

Mas. Yf onely Peter, and the bysshoppes of Rome haue the keyes of the kingdome of heauen, and they only haue power to open the same, forsothe I would not dye, when the sea of Rome is vacant, and voyd of a bysshop. For then shoulde there bee no body, whiche shoulde open heauen gates to me. And I marueyle more ouer of whome they gatte the keyes of purgatory, for it apereth by theyr own cōfession, that Christ gaue hym none other keyes, but of the kyngdom of heauen onely. But I coulde haue chosen hym, euen with one woorde.

Lepi. Howe?

Mas. Thus would I haue sayed. Themperours porter hathe the keye of themperour hys court, and hathe authoritie to open and shit: and the Mayor of a citie hathe authoritie to bynde and loose, and yet neither of them bothe is themperour. Of a like sorte, be it that Peter had the keyes, & authorytie to binde and lose: it followeth not therfore that he is the head, and lord of the churche of god, that he is equall with Christe, or elles at leste his vicar of equall authoritie

by

by whome our faythe may be stable and suer, that he is the vmpier and iudge of all controuersies, whiche arise in holie scripture. But tell me thys one thynge, what answere made thembassadour of Constantinople to thys thinge.

Lepidus. Fyrste he answered, that Christ gaue not the keyes euen then to Peter, but promysed them only, not doutinge but that Christe kept promes with him. But he was desirous to know of master Falsidicus, the time when he deliuered the keies to Peter, and gaue him thauthoritie to louse & to bind, & what wordes he sayed when he gaue them. For by that meanes the trueth might appere, what was ment by these keyes, and what is thys authoritie. To thys master Falsidicus made answere: That he assuered Peter of them, when after hys resurrection he asked Peter, whether he loued hym more earnestly then the rest dyd or not. vnto whome Peter made answere, saying. Thou knowest O Lord that I loue the, then Christ gaue him iniunccion to feede his shepe. In the very selfe same houre he made him the chiefe shepard and bishop of al soules. Thē Thembassador of Constantinople smylinge sayed: yf preachinge the worde of God be the fedinge of soules, (as the holy doctors with one assent doeth expound it, it is with out dout that that office was not onelye gyuen to Peter, but also to al the rest of thapostles, and namely to Paule, who wryteth in special wordes, that he labored more then all the rest did in the ministery of preaching. Yea and Christe himselfe before he spake these wordes to Peter, commaunded the selfe same thynge to all the Apostles sayinge; goe ye throughe out the vniuersall worlde, and preache the Gospell to all creatures. So

that

that it can not be sayed that the office of preachynge was gyuen by Christe onely, to Peter, and to the Bysshoppes of Rome in ordinary succession after him, by whose appoyntment it shoulde also descend to other. For then must it be graunted that there hath bene very fewe lawefull and trewe Bysshoppes, whiche had lawefull authoritie to preache, and so fewe that Peter onely maye bee accountyd the trewe Bysshoppe, whiche preached lawefully, and a fewe besides, who were by him appoynted in such countryes where as he preached. By thys meanes Paule and the elleuen Apostles, and suche as were by them conuerted to the faythe, neither were truely bishoppes, neither yet preached lawefullye, because they neither had their Bishoprike, neither authoritie to preache of Peter. And more ouer none after the death of Peter should haue bene made Bishop, neither haue licence to preache beslydes the Bysshoppe of Rome. And truely the Bysshoppes of Rome, haue committed a greuouse offence in that they haue hyd this large and greate authorytye of theyrs, that they had so necessarye in the churche of God. Then replied master Fallidicus, euen as Peter quod he loued Christ more earnestly then the rest of the Apostles, as it is plaine by the wordes of his aunswere, when Christe demaunded him whether he loued hym more feruentlye then the rest dyd: so had he more authoritie gyuen vnto hym ouer the shepe of Christ, then the rest of the Apostles. To this answered thimbassador of Cõstãtinople. And where I praye you haue you founde that Peters aunswere was to Christ, that he was more earnestly beloued of him then of the rest of ꝑ Apostles. Not withstandyng that he was so demaunded, yet hys aunswere was

onely in thys wyse. Thou knowest O lorde that thou art beloued of me. He sayed not: Thou knowest O Lorde that thou arte more feruentlye beloued of me then of the rest. For so coulde he neuer haue sayed without greate suspicion of arrogancie, because it was vnknowē to hym how much ꝑ rest loued Christ. But let it be graunted that Christ was more earnestly beloued of Peter then of the rest: doeth it therefore folowe, that Christ gaue him more power? Or in case he gaue hym more was it therfore most of all? For it is not all one thing to saye fede my shepe, and to saye, be thou head of my churche, or elles: Take thou more authoritie then the other Apostles. And as for that Christe demaundyd of him thryse, whether he loued hym or not: it was done for thys ende and purpose, that hys loue beinge declared by thryse confessynge, myght counteruayle and somewhat make amendes for his fault. Whē he thrise denied him, he minded to haue Peters loue sealed, (as it were) & warranted before he would commit vnto him the cure of soules, that all meme myghte knowe no man can bee a good shephard onles he loue Christ earnestly. Furthermore yf your reason were a good reason, it shoulde rather folowe therof that Christe declared Jhon the chiefe Bysshop then Peter. For it is written of Johu, this is the disciple whom Christ loued. Wherfore if he were beloued of Christ aboue other, he gaue vnto him more worthye gyftes, & replenished him more aboūdantlye with grace, and therfore placed hym aboue the other, and namelye for that he was more mete for the purpose by the reason of the excellent giftes, whiche he receiued at Goddes handes. And so much the more bycause it shoulde rather appeare, that Jhon loued

Christ

Christ more then the other did, & was loued againe of Christ, & knew hi more thorowly, & therfore more like to be iudged worthye to feed the shepe of Christe.

Yt may be proued that Christ would haue ordeined hym the vniuersall shepard, not onely by reason of the noble light of the heuenly spirit, wherwith he was indued, and was alwayes nighe and familiare to Christe, and amongest all the rest of thapostles he alone folowed him to the crosse: but chiefly for thys cause, that when he was vpon the crosse he committed his mother vnto him, in whome only (as you your selues doe confesse) the lyuely churche of Christe remayned after Christes death. For al thapostles were not a litle afrayed, and dismayd with that terryble & dolefull sight of Christes death vpon the crosse, accordingly as Christe had told hym before. And if John were not ordeyned the supreme head of the churche of Christe, then muche lesse was Peter. Then sayed master Falsidicus will ye see howe Christe ordeyned onely Peter to be the chiefe Pastor of all? Reade the Gospel of Luke and there shal ye fynde spoken onely to Peter: Thou shalt be a fisher of menne. Thereunto answered thimbassadour. And will you see how Christe ordeyned not Peter to bee the chiefe Pastor of all? Reade the Gospell of Mathewe, and Marcke, and there shal ye finde the same spoken also of Christ to Andrewe, and the two sonnes of zebedei. Wherfore it followeth that Peter onely was not assigned of Christ to be the fisher of men. Yea and consequently not alone of his owne shepe. Christ neuer sayed to Peter onely fede thou my shepe, be thou onely a fisher of menne. To the onely will I gyue the keyes of the kingedome of heauen. No, he neuer saied so muche as this Luc. v.

this: be thou onely a shepard and a fyther aboue the reste of thapostles. Take thou more authoritie then they haue. But he sayed in simple and plaine wordes, I will gyue vnto thee the keyes of the kyngdome of heauē, and so he kept promes. Mary he gaue the same keyes also to the reste of thapostles. And that this is trew it is euident. For Christe gaue the keyes to Peter and to the reste of thapostles after his resurrection from deathe, standynge in the middest of them, when he had saluted them and shewed hys handes and hys syde that they should both see and know him that talked with them and deliuered them the keies to be in dede very Christe the sonne of god, he sayed vnto them as John wryteth. Euen as my father sent me, so I send you. As though he had sayd: my father sent me in to thys worlde that I shoulde preache the gospel, as Esay the prophet saied longe agoe. Therfore do I send you euen of the same fashion throughe out the worlde to preache thys glad tidinges, that I am nayled vpon the crosse, and dead for the sinnes of the whole worlde: that I am the onely and euerlastynge redempcyon, and reconciler, who haue purchased the fauour of the eternall father to all mannekynde by the price & ransome of my blonde, and that al the synnes of al the menne in the worlde be pardoned and blotted out for my sake. The selfe same sentence Marke expressed, albeit it wer in other wordes when he sheweth how Christe after his resurrection from death saied to his Apostles going throughe out the vniuersall worlde, preache the gospell to all creatures. And Mathewe. Goe forthe, teache al people. Lucke wryteth that Christe sayed: it is written, and therfore it must bee that Christe shall suffer, and rise

The keyes were not geuen onelye to Peter.

Mar. xvi.

Mat. xxviii. Luc. xxiiii.

agayne

agayne from deathe the thyrde daye: in whose name repentaunce and remission of synnes must bee preached to al people beginning at Hierusalē. It is plain that the Euangelistes agre hetherto. John furthermore doeth adde that Christe sayed vnto them, take ye the holy goste. Which thing Luke declareth after another sorte, saying: that Christ opened theyr myndes that they might vnderstād the scriptures, which is the very trewe office of the holy goste, wherefore he gaue them the holy gost, brething vpon them, that is (as Luke doeth declare) he opened theyr myndes and knowledge that they might vnderstande the holy scriptures, and that was so done that they myght knowe, and perceaue, that the Gospell, whiche they shoulde preache, was no vayne or newe thynge, but trewe and of antiquitie, spoken of before by the vnfayned sayinges of the prophetes. Which thing they beleuinge vndoutedly, throughe an earnest styrringe and motion of the holy gost, shoulde preache the gospell throughe out the whole world. Now afterward when he gaue them the keyes, John writeth that he sayed: whose synnes so euer ye forgeue, they bee forgeuen them, and whose sinnes so euer ye retaine they be retayned. That is to say: I deliuer you the keyes of the kingdome of heauen, and giue you authoritye and power to open and shit thesame, by the kingdom of heauen he vnderstandeth the kyngdome of grace, and the kyngdome of glorye. The synnefull manne was driuen out of the kingdome of the heauenly fauour, neither can he fynde any meanes or wayes to entre into thesame agayne but by faithe. Accordinge to the doctrine of paule. He cannot beleue of the common sorte onles he heare the worde of the gospell, whiche cannot be without preaching. So that there Rom.i. Rom.iiii. Rom.x.

was authoritie geuen vnto thapostles, and keyes de-
liuered vnto thē, that they should open the kingdome
of heauen to the wicked, when Christ gaue them au-
thoritie to preache the gospel, that is to saie to teach
that men be saued by Christ. Because that when thei
were sinners, and without the kingdome of the grace
of Christe, neyther had any waye opened whereby
they might entre: thapostles in preachinge the gos-
pell opened the gate of the fauour and grace of god
vnto them, which guided them in ỹ ready and plaine
waye, wherby they might obteyne to them selues the
fauor of god by beleuing that Christ died for them,
by whose mean and helpe they are saued, thapostles
did moue, and stire men to giue credit to this truthe.
And suche of them as beleued, entred in the kyng-
dome of Christe by fayth, and the Apostles opened
the gate vnto thē by preaching the word of the gos-
pel, & did set open the waye for their entrye. But if ỹ
hearers of this preachig beleued not: thapostles dyd
shut the gate of gods fauor, whē they taught in their
preachinge, that onles they beleued the gospell there
was no hope of saluacion, neither any other way or
meanes, wherby they mought entre the kingdome of
the fauor of god: Not withstandinge they had done
as many good workes, as bee in the whole worlde.
And so is this opening and shutting, (as a man may
call it) a lousing and a bindinge, as Christe declared
when he saied to Peter, to the wil I giue the keies of
the kingdome of heuen. What soeuer thou shalt bind
in earth, shalbe bound in heauen, and whatsoeur thou
lousest i earth it shalbe also loused i heauē. Now these
keies, and power to open and shut, to loose and bynd
were geuē to the Apostles, whē Christ said vnto thē,
whose synnes ye forgeue, they shall bee forgeuen, and
whose

Mat. xvi.

whose synnes, ye retayne they shall bee retayned.

Not that the Apostles themselues should haue power, and authoritie to pardon, and forgeue sinne, for that belongeth to God alone. And that shoulde be a wonderful ydolatry and blasphemy to attribute and assigne that thynge to man, whiche belongeth to god onely. Who is onelye he, that forgyueth sinnes for Christes sake, euen as it is onely he, whiche powreth fayth into vs, and men be hys seruantes and ministers, in that they preache the gospell and moue men to beleue. But the beleuinge it selfe, and the faythe it selfe, and the remission of synne, whiche is by it procured, is the gift of God: Then the Apostles had no power to remitte and retayne synnes at their owne wyll and pleasure. Neither to loose and bynde, neyther yet to bynge manne in or out of the kyngdome of God, when they lusted so to doe: but they had power to preache the gospell, and to shewe that thys preachynge must be beleued, and that thys gospell must be embraced with a sound faythe, yf they intend to haue forgyuenes of sinnes at goddes handes, and so to be loosed, & to enter into the kingdom of grace. For they onely haue their sinnes forgyuen thē, which beleue the gospell: they onely be loosed and enter into the kyngdome of god. They had also authoritie to declare, that their sinnes were retayned, whiche beleued not the gospell, and that they onelye bee bounde and shut out of the kyngdome of God. Yt is euident and playne by Sayncte Luke, that thys is the wil and mynde of Christe, who declarethe the selfesame sentence with more playne wordes saying: Christ sayed to his Apostles ỹ Christ must dey, as it was writtē, & ryse agayne the thirde daye from death, and that repentaunce and remission of sinne must be preached to

Ephe. ii.

Luc. xxiiii.

all

all nacions in hys name. So that by thys it is easie to be perceyued, that Christe gaue hys Apostles keyes and power, not properly to forgyue synne, but to preache remission of synnes to all them that beleue throughe Christ. The selfe same thyng maye also be confirmed by the authoritie of Saynct Marke: who expondyng the same sentence (although it be in other wordes) sayeth: that Christe sayed to his Apostles. Goe through out the whole worlde and preache the gospell to all creatures: who so beleueth and is baptised shalbe saued: and he that beleueth not shall be dampned. Whereby it maye be well perceyued, that the authoritie & power which Christ gaue vnto hys Apostles, was not to saue and condempne: but onely to preache the gospell, and to shewe the waye of saluacion, in that they moued mē to enter into that way, and they declared hym to be within the compasse of condempnacion which gaue no credit to the gospell, and went about to disuade men from thys vnbeleefe. These be the keyes: thys is the power whiche Christ gaue to hys Apostles, and not onely to his Apostles, but also vnto all their successors. Which thyng doeth euidently appeare by the wordes of Christ, when he sayeth to his Apostles. That whiche I saye to you,
Mar. 13. I saye to all. Neither semeth it any thing lykely, that he spake that thyng whiche he taught, to them only: but to all. Truelye thys is certayne as Saynct Hierome wrot vpon thys sayng. (To the I will gyue the keyes of the heauenly kyngdome). That ỹ bishops & priestes haue thought hitherto, by the reason of their pryde, and pharisaical arrogancie, that they had power to condempne the gyltles, and to deliuer the gyltie. But truelye they bee deceyued all ouer the fielde.

Because

Because that the question is not before God of the iudgement of the priest: but of the life of the sinner. Whereby he playnlye declarethe, that the choyse of binding and loosinge is not left in the libertie of the priest, but in the sinner, who is cõmaunded to beleue. The minister of Gods word doeth not absolue, but he publisheth & declareth man to be absolued: & likewise he declareth man to be bound and condempned onles he beleue. Euen as ỹ scepter royal signifieth a kinges power, and the swerde the empire: So likewise doth the keyes betoken the spirituall gouernaunce of the kingdome of god. For whosoeuer he be that preache the gospell, be it whosoeuer ye will: in that he preacheth, he doeth all that lyeth in him to open the kingdome of heauẽ to the hearers, whether it be openly or priuatly that he preache to one or to many. Moreouer he delyuereth all the beleuers, he forgiueth all theyr synnes, he saueth them, and bringeth them into the kingdome of God, when he teacheth that they be fre by faythe, and because they beleue, that theyr synnes bee forgeuen them they bee saued, and in the kingdome of Christe. Agayne on the other syde, he byndeth al them, which beleue not, he retayneth their synnes, he condempneth them, and shutteth them out of the kingdome of heauen, when he teacheth them that they are bound, that they remaine in theyr sinne, that they be dampned, and shut out of the kingedome of grace by the reason of theyr vnbeleefe. But thys thing is worthye to be noted ỹ there is two kingedomes of Christe in earthe, whereof the one is spirituall, and canne not bee seen, wherin dwell onely the godly and righteouse men: and another, that is much greater, wherein abyde not onely the good, but also

all other, that bee Baptized, whiche will seme to bee christians. Neyther were the keyes of bothe these kingdomes deliuered onely to Peter, but also to all the rest of thapostles, and by them to the successours of thapostles, that the ministers of the worde of god might not onely shut, and open the fyrste kingdome (as it is before declared) but also the second. For they maye suspende, and excommunicate synners openly, when they amende not, after suche order as Christe hathe appoynted, and so shut them out of the seconde kingdome, and bannishe them the company of other christians. They maye also loose, when they shewe forthe tokens of penaunce, that is to say, they maye declare in the christian congregacion, that they be fre, euen as before they declared them to bee bound: & by that meanes open vnto them the seconde kyngdome, and graunte vnto them the libertie to dwel and abyd in the company of other christians, & with them to receaue the holy Sacramentes. Then were these the keies & thys the authoritie, that Christ spake of, whē he sayd to his apostles, what so euer ye shal bynde in earth it shall be bounde in heauen, and what soeuer ye shall loose in earth it shalbe loosed also in heauen. The ministers also of the churhe of Christe may, and ought to enioyne penaunce to suche, as bee excommunicated at such time, as they conuerte and repent, that they maye openly shewe tokens of a penitente harte, not that they may thynke thereby to satisfy & make a sufficient recompense for theyr offēces in the sight of God, for ẏ which Christ hath suffered long a goe ẏ neither they thēselues, neither other folowing their example should any more committe the lyke offences, neither should withstand the correction of the churche and of the ministers. But as touchynge the signes

Mat. xvi. aut. xviii. John. xx. c

signes that bee vnknowen and secret: the ministers ought not scrupulously to inquire for ꝑ knowleage of them. Neuertheles̄e the manne, that is troubled with thys kynde of synnes, and commynge to a sobre and learned minister in christiā knowledge, telling him of the trouble of hys conscience, and requiryng of hym, what were best for him to doe, wherby to be restored agayne to goddes mercye. Then shall thys Phisician preache to the soule so repentaunt the gospell, and moue him to beleue that Christ is he who hath satisfied for hys synnes, & also for the sinnes of the whole worlde, Whiche thyng when the sinner beleueth, immediatly the minister of goddes worde openeth vnto him the kyngdome of heauen, and beareth witnes that hys sinnes be nowe forgyuen hym, and also the sinner so repentaunt may make a reherfall and a confession of hys fayth before the sayd learned minister, and maye demaunde of hym whether that bee a true and liuely fayth, which shal suffice to saluacion. Then shall thys minister open vnto hym the whole doctrine of Christes fayth, and so induce him to the true fayth, and shewe him the waye wherby he maye attayne to the right fayth, and remayne therin increasing continually. Then shall the minister open vnto hym remedies mete for hym wherby he may preserue himselfe safe and vnspotted from suche grieuous offences as he perceyueth hym most enclined vnto. And who so hath a true faythe, goeth streyght wayes to Christe with the Samaritane, to render present thankes in hys presence. But who so hath not that fayth, he shall alwayes be a wicked manne and an infidell though he confesse hymselfe euery daye a thousand tymes.

Esa. liii. c
Roma. iii. c
1 Iohn. ii. a.

Thys is the power, whiche Christ gaue not onely to

Math.xx.c Peter, but to all the Apostles of hys churche, that is to saye, to preache the gospell, to declare the remissi-
Mat.xxiiii.c on of sinnes to all them, that beleue, and to holde in
Marc.xvi.b synne suche as beleue not, to minister the sacramen-
tes according to the word of god, & Christes instituci-
Mat.xviii.b on, and to punishe them, that offende openly, and will not repent, when they be entreated after suche a sort, as Christ hath appoynted. That is, first that they be excomunicat, and then, yf they amend, to be receyued agayne into the christian congregacion. This power being gyuen by Christ vnto his churche is not exten-
math.xvi.c. dyd but to them onely, whiche be in thys lyfe, whiles
and.xviii.b they liue here. And therfore sayed Christ, whatsoeuer
John.xx.c. ye shall bynde, or whatsoeuer ye shall loose (not indifferently in all places, but in earth) shalbe bounde and loosid. Wherfore it is true that the churche militant hath no power vpō thē, that be passed out of this lif, and rest in the lorde. Neither gaue he any authoritie to the churche militant, to gyue pardons a pena et culpa, neither to ordayne newe kyndes of wurshippinges, neither to deuise newe doctrines, or to make newe articles of the faythe, or to deuise newe commaundementes, and that vpon such a condicion, that mennes consciences must bee forced & tyed to beleue thesame wicked decrees of menne with a tirannicall payne, euen to the death, to the sworde, to the flame and fire appoinctyd for the transgressors of thesame ordinaunces. Christ sayed to hys Apostles, ye shalbe my witnesses not onely in Hierusalem, but also in all Jury and Samaria, euen to the vttermoste partes
Act.i.ii. of the worlde. And it is playne that witnesses muste
Lucke.xxiiii. testifye the treuthe, and neither adde, nor take away
John.xv. from thesame any word, namely when as the church

of

of Chriſt is his ſpouſe, and ſhe muſt be obedient vnto him, as to her huſband, and ſpeake thoſe wordes only, which ſhe heareth of him. For Chriſt opened to his Apoſtles, and to the fyrſte beginninge of his churche all thynges, that ſemed profitable and neceſſary to thobteyninge of ſaluacion, wherefore he ſayed to his diſciples. I haue diſcloſed all thinges vnto you that I haue receaued of my father. The holy gooſte opened theyr myndes, that they myght vnderſtande the ſcriptures, and informed and taught them all ſuche thynges, as Chriſte had ſayed vnto them. So that it can not be without a very heynouſe offence, that any thinge ſhould be added to the doctrine of Chriſt, and thapoſtles, and of the fyrſte moſte pure and ſyncere churche. Wherfore eyther Chriſte is a lyar when he ſayeth that he taught all: or elles were the apoſtles wicked, in that they did not put the reſt of the articles of our faythe into the Creede, whiche the byſhoppes of Rome boaſte they could fynd out afterwarde, and that ſuche articles (as they ſaie) as be very neceſſary, beſides a greate number of preceptes, whiche they haue inuented. The Euangeliſtes alſo ſhoulde haue ben wicked creatures, to kepe hidde thinges ſo neceſſary to oure ſaluacion. But neither were thapoſtles wycked, neyther Chriſte a lyar. For bothe Chriſte taught all thynges neceſſary, and they deliuered the ſame to menne accordinglye. And Chriſt commaunded them preciſely that they ſhould teache the people to obſerue, and kepe all thoſe thynges, not whiche they dreamed themſelues, but whiche he commaunded them. Yea and Paule thapoſtle determined all creatures, not humayne onely, but celeſtiall alſo, and angelicall to be accurſed, whiche preached any other

Eph. v.
Iohn. xv.
Luke. xxiiii.
Iohn. xiiii.
Mat. xxviii.
Mar. xvi.
Gala. i.
Iaco. i.

gospel then the gospell of Christ. We be all borne a new by ỹ word of god, by ỹ which thing onely, as by a perfect and stronge norisheinent, we liue and contine we. Now then when master Falsidicus thought the keyes to bee taken out of the popes handes by vnaunswerable reasons, by and by he clapped hys handes vpon hys weapon sayinge. Reade Sayncte Luke, and ye shall see howe Christe willeth the disciples to prouide for theinselues two swordes. Who makinge aunswere that they had twayne in a readines, Christ sayed they were enoughe. Therfore hath the Pope two swordes, and the highest power vpon both sydes, the one spiritual, the other temporall.

Luke. xxii. c.

Mas. Oh what a fyne dialecticall witte was that. Truelye thys consequence and reason coulde not be aunswered to. Uerely I meruayle muche whye they haue not caused thys long tyme Sayncte Peter to be paynted with keyes hangynge vpon hys girdle, and holdyng two swordes in hys handes, the one in the ryght, and the other in the left, to declare hys chiefe prerogatiue, and so to make menne afrayd with that fearefull fyght. But tell me I praye you what aunswered the embassador to this.

Lepi. He aunswered that Christe promised and gaue to Peter, and the Apostles keyes, and not swordes, and that when Peter vsed a sworde for the defence of hys master, Christ hymselfe stayed hys vnaduised rashenes. Bycause the kyngdome of Christe is not of thys worlde, neither is it worldly, and yearthlye: but heauenly, and spirituall. Neither was he sent of his father to reigne in this world of a carnal fashiõ, as in a kingdom, but he was sent to minister and serue, and to geue hys life for our saluacion. And forasmuche as he

Ioh. xviii. e

Math. xx. b
Mar. xxviii.
Mar. x. e
Luc. xxii. b

he sent his Apostles euen of a lyke fashion, as he hym
selfe was sent of his father, he sēt them not as though
they shoulde reygne in the worlde, but to be lyke in-
nocent lambes amongest wolues. And to mynde to
stablishe one supreme head in the churche of Christe Math. x. b
is nothynge els, but a crownynge agayne of Christe Luke. x. a
with a crowne of thorne, and when he is apparelled
with a purple and a kyngly vesture, to deliuer hym to
menne to be made a laughing stocke, as he was scor-
ned in tymes past of the Iewes, when he honge vp-
on the crosse. Therfore Christ foreseing that his Apo-
stles would be offended with his death, and woulde Mat. xxvi. c.
slippe from that trust they had in hym (as he prophe- Mar. xiiii. d.
cied to them before) he demaunded of them, whether Iohn. xvi. d
they wāted any maner of thing, whē he sent thē forth Luc. xxii. c
naked and destitute of all mannes helpe. And when
they aunswered that they wanted nothyng, he sayed: Math. x. a
nowe then prouide you for swordes, as thoughe he Marke. vi. a
had sayed. Hetherto haue I bene your mercifull mas- Luc. xx. a
ter and gouernour, I haue defended you, I haue pro-
uided all necessaries for you, as for my beloued chyl-
drē, ye lacked nothing, I toke the tuition of you. But
bycause within thys short space, when ye shall see me
caught by the handes of the wicked, and bounde, & Mat. xxvi. c
in conclusion dye, ye will be offended with that mise- Mar. xiiii. d.
rable syght, and will faynt from that sure trust, that Iohn. xvi. d.
ye haue had in me hetherto, it is nedefull that from
hence forth ye prouide for your selues: and therfore I
gyue you warninge to prepare ye swordes for youre
defence, for the persecution that commeth vpon you
shalbe great. And when they shewed two swordes, & Luc. xxii. c
sayed master, loe here be two swordes, Christ answe-
red them rebukingly with a priuie checke, saing they
be ynough. Thys was a wonderfull declaration and
figure

fygure of the dulnes of the Apostles, and of the clemencie of Christe. Euen as thoughe tender infantes shoulde haue shewed their father two speres made of reedes, and then aske of hym, whether that speres of reede were sufficient to ouercome an excedyng strong armie: vnto whom the father shoulde aunswere with a smilling countenaunce, saying: yea, they be sufficiēt, as though he had sayed: O ye tenderlynges thynke you ỹ speres of reed can preuayle without my helpe. Now is it here euident, first and formost that Christ gaue not swordes to his Apostles: whereof it followeth that he gaue them not the supreme power, and authoritie bothe spirituall and temporall, whiche is shadowed (as you holde opinio) by these two swordes. And more ouer Peter only made not thanswere: Loe here be two swordes, but the disciples, as Luke playnly doeth witnes. Neyther is it red any where that Peter alone had two swordes. And althoughe it were so, that the highest supremacie wher shadowed by these two swordes, yet maye ye not by anye meanes inferre or goe about to proue thereby, that thesame authoritie belonged onely to Peter, but to all thapostles ioyntly: and the whole churche together. And yet can I not perceaue howe these reasons hange together. Christe sayed checkingly that two swordes were enough, ergo Peter had the supreme authoritie bothe spirituall, and temporall geuen vnto him. Then would master Falsidicus without dout haue made some preaty aunswere, as his fashyon is, yf the Pope had not cōmaunded hym to holde hys peace, fearinge leste thys hatefull dysputacyon of bothe swordes should offend themperour. Whereof he sayed to Falsidicus, that it was sufficient for this

Gene. 9. a
Ezech. xi. a
Math. xxvi.
Luke. xxii.
Iohn. xviii.
Apoc. xiii.

present

present to reteyne the one sworde, that is to say the chiefe dominion in spirituall matters, & to permitte the other of temporall matters to Ceasars maiestie.

Mas. A wonderfull liberalitie.

Lepi. But ye muste knowe, that he graunted thys but for a tyme, yea and againste his will. For hys left arme is weake and small, because he is not accustomed to vse it, but let hym alone, & suffre his strengthe with a litle excercise to come to hym, and yee shall see him halt and lame as he is, shed more bloude alone then all themperours of the worlde, though ye put thē together. Then master Falsidicus fynding other matters to talke vpon, sayed. You know ryght well master embassador that Christe kepeth promes: and if he geue a name to any man at any tyme, that name is not a voyde name, it is not the bare sounde of a voyce, but the trewth of the thinge it selfe is also agreable to the name. And because Christe sayed to Simon, from henceforthe thou shalt bee called Cephas, whiche by interpretacion signifieth a head: ye muste of necessitie graunt that Christe gaue in deede that, whiche he promysed with speciall and playne wordes. Simon was called Cephas, that is to saye a heade, then it foloweth that he was a heade by the name, that Christe gaue him, ergo he was a head in dede, that the trueth might be agreable to the name. To this thembassador aunswered. Truly ye be worthy to be burned, for yf ye burne them, which depraue the wrytinges of thapostles, what ought ye to doe to them, which peruerte falsely the wordes of Christ himselfe? Christe sayed to Peter thou shalt be called Cephas, and Cephas is a worde of the language of the Sirians. Whiche is as muche to saye as Peter

Mat. xxvi. c.

John. i. d

that is a stone. But you depraueinge the holy scriptures, saye that Christe sayed, thou shalte be called a head, & this do you to thende that you would drawe all sentences (as thoughe it were halynge them by the necke) writhing them to your peruerse purpose, and in the meane tyme corrupting the trueth, and the maiestie of holy scriptures.

Mas. I marvayle that he was euer afterwarde called Peter, and not rather heade, if it bee so that thys name Cephas signifie a head, and not Petra, which is a stoone, as master Falsidicus did contende. But tell me I praye you was he not ashamed to speake any more.

Lepi. Nay then he semed but as it were to beginne to proue the primacie of Peter.

Mas. And what thing brought he therfore.

Lepi. First & formost thus he saied. Euen as it is euident by the scriptures of the olde testament that the fyrste begotten, was the Lorde ouer all hys brothren, euen so because it is euident that Peter was the fyrste begotten of Christ, he must be lord ouer all the rest, & supreme head of ỹ whole church of Christe. which thig may be proued by that, that Peter as the chiefe & moste worthy parson speaketh alwaies first for them all: and amongest the reste he was alwayes accounted, and named the first. Yea be it, that it could not bee proued by anye worde of God, that Peter was declared supreme head by Christ: yet ought we to beleue it, forasmuche as we muste assuredlye perswade our selues, that Christe ordered his churche well, and therefore that it was done by a certayne reasō & order, for wher as a certaine order is not obserued, ther must al thinges of force be ful of cōfusiō

And

And certayne order can there none be, where as there be not degrees of mē higher, and lougher. But where as there is a higher degre of men, there muste ye ascende and come to one, as to a supreme head, that the nature of order maye bee preserued, whiche bycause it can not procede so farre, but that it muste haue an ende, onles there shoulde be some supreme head established, it shoulde come all together to nothing. Now likely it is not, that Christ appoynted any other head then Peter: ergo Peter was the supreme head. The selfe same thynge maye be proued of the order of naturall thynges, where all thynges be referred to one, as to a chiefe beginninge and originall cause. For not onely in any ciuile gouernaunce of man (yf the common welthes be well ordered) there is one supreme head: but amongest brute beastes also we see thys dignitie of order obserued. Bees haue their kynge, who gouerne the baser sorte of the common people, and ouersee them to doe their dewties. The Cranes haue one chief guide whom all the rest doeth folowe. The shepe also haue their shepehard, whose voyce they know, & whom they folowe, and at whose commaundement they be. So that, loke howe muche the church of Christ is more excellent, & more perfect, then other thynges, that belonge to manne, and is also better gouerned, so much is it the more lykely, that there must be one supreme head in it, at whose commaundement all meme must hange, as thoughe he were a God. To these reasons the imbassador made aunswere. Yf the first begotten amongest thapostles ought to be lord of al the rest (as Fallidicus said euē nowe) for as muche as Andrewe was called before Peter to the office of the Apostleshipe, Peter shoulde John. 1.

not take the lordshippe awaye from hym, whiche of ryght shoulde haue a better tytle to it. But trueth it is, that Christ is the first begotten amongest his brethren, & he is onely the lord of all. And all the worthines of the first begettyng, whiche was shadowed in the first begotten of the olde testament, is fulfilled in Christ hymselfe. Nowe because that the kyngdome of Christ is altogether spirituall, he maye be accounted greater, higher, and more excellent, not that is first borne to Christe in this worlde, nor he that is richer, or more noble after the flesshe, not he that is better learned: but he that excelleth more in godlynes, & hath receyued more lighte and strengthe of the holy goste. And althoughe Peter vsed oftē times to choppe in, and speake firste by the reason of his boldnes, hys zeale, hys earnestnes, and age: yet folowyth it not of that, that he had authoritie and dominion ouer the rest of the Apostles, neither that he was their Pope. Neither is he whiche speaketh fyrste in any congregacion to be thought the head of all the rest. For then in dede shoulde Peter haue bene Pope not onely before Christe gaue hym the keyes, but also before he promised hym them, because that often tymes longe before that tyme, he spake before hys felowes. And Philip also, and Andrewe, and Thomas, and the rest should by this reason haue bene Popes, all the which spake first at sundry times. And although Christ whē he numbred the Apostles, named Peter first, yet is it not necessary, that therfore he shoulde be Pope ouer the rest. Euen as our Bysshop of Constantinople hath spoken first in sundrye counselles that hath bene, and hath also bene taken for the first Bysshop, because he spake fyrst, and sat first in the congregacion. And yet

Iohn. vi. xi and. xiii.

for

for all that was he neuer iudged Bysshop ouer all other Bysshoppes, neither yet their head, (whiche ye chalenged to you by tyrannye) I graunte trewly that Christ dyd set in order, and gouerned his church wonderfully well, and that it hathe gone forward in a wonderfull ordre, so that I can not deny but there muste bee some supreme heade in that churche. But that heade is Christe hym selfe (as Paule testifieth) who by his spirite is present with hys churche euermore, and gouerneth it after a more wonderfull fashion then mannes vnderstanding can comprehende. Neither is it nedefull to dreame of any other vniuersall heade in earthe, for Christ him selfe without any other Popes, gouerneth hys churche by hys ministers most wonderfully, but let vs graunt that Christ declared Peter to be the heade of thapostles and of the fyrste churche, at the whiche tyme because they were very fewe he might right well gouerne thē all. But now when the church of Christ is spred abrod throughe out the whole worlde, it is not possible for him to knowe them all, or to visit them all, to vnderstande theyr tonges, to heare theyr matters, to prouyde for them all, and gouerne thē al well. One crane maye well be the guyde to other .xxv. cranes, or elles peraduenture fiftie, but me thinket h, that it is a thig vnpossible that all the cranes in the worlde should followe this one crane as theyr onely guyde, yea and be it that they all folowed thys one, yet doeth not that proue that this one beinge guyde is the heade of all the reste. Of a like sorte saye I of the bees, amongest whome it maye wel be and is, that one bee, be kinge and gouernor of all ỹ other, that be in the same hyue, as a bysshoppe maye be the gouerner of all the soules

that be within his diocese. But yet as it can not bee that one bee shoulde gouerne all the bees of the worlde, so neyther canne it bee that one byshoppe of Rome canne haue the cure of all the soules in the worlde.

Mas. Will you haue me say to you, what I thinke? This byshoppe of ours semeth to me a very asse, and without all iudgement and perceueraunce, and thys is my reason, that moueth me so to saye. I haue seen many times, & haue proued by experience the thing, that I shall tell: when one sheparde hathe the charge of a thousād shepe, it is as much, as he is able to do, to fede so many and order thē well, but the same sheparde can not kepe syxe or eight thousande, and yet muche lesse, an hūdreth beastes, and a thousand shepe together, and yet muche lesse a thousande shepe and a thousande beastes, an hundrethe oxen, an hundreth kyne, an hundrethe asses, & an hundreth swyne. But thys bishoppe of oures will be the vniuersall bishop, and shepard of all Christian menne, amongest whom bee founde not only beastes innumerable, but asses also, and kyne, bores, and swyne, and an infinit number of foxes, and wolues. Ye knowe that I am the master of his horse, and am fayne sometyme to spend a whole moneth to tame one fearse beaste, or before I canne brynge a mule to her trewe pase. And he will take vpon hym to tame all the whole worlde, and he thinketh to bringe it to passe, that all menne shall walke right the same waye that ledeth to god. But I pray you tell on the dispu aciō, for in hearing you recite godly their reasōs (in ẏ name of god) I am more and more strengthened in the trueth,

Lepi. He broughte more ouer an argument of the

chiefe

chiefe prieste of the Jewes, saying: it is plaine, that ẏ olde testament is a figure of the newe, nowe then, as they by the wyll of god had one chiefe priest aboue all other, so the christian men now a daies must haue one Pope. And he must be honoured, & set forth with such beutie and glory, that the kinges of the world (as the prophetes haue spoken before) shall come to wurship this merueylous godhead in earth. And furthermore al christiā mē shal come to Rome, as to a spiritual Jerusalem, whiche was shadowed by that earthly Hierusalem, to obteyne saluacion, and receyue heauen at the Popes handes. And thē he sayed thus. Nowe me thynketh that I haue confirmed, and establishe sufficiently the Popeshippe with these reasons and authorities, that I haue alleged. Wherefore nowe wyll I make an ende and gyue place to other: And to conclude of thys, I am sure that the imbassador can not fynde one word in the holy scripture that maye make by any meanes agaynste thys primacie once planted, and established. Then thimbassador made aunswere in thys wyse. The Jewes were but fewe in comparison of the christian men, who yf they were thys day compared with them, they should appeare innumerable. And agayne, they were all knyt, and ioyned together in one narrowe place, but the christian menne thys day be despersed through out the whole world. Wherfore that thynge, whiche according to the wyll of God was mete for them then, (that is to say, that they shoulde haue one chiefe prieste in earthe) can not agree nowe with vs of these dayes. Moreouer the highe priesthode of the Jewes shadowed not the highe priesthode of the Byshops of Rome: but the high priesthod of Christ. Wherfore that highe priesthod of the Jewes after a certayne tyme had an ende.

And

And furthermore, the yearthlye Hierusalem, figured not Rome: but ỳ spirituall church of Christ whereunto all the chosen resort, to obtayne fauoure and helth of Christ our chiefe and euerlastyng prieste, to whom all the princes of the yearth ought to come flatte downe and worshyppe, that they maye acknowledge and confesse hym to be the sonne of God. But your Rome is so farre vnlike to the spirituall Hierusalem, that it maye worthelye be called sythie, and carnall Babilon as Peter termed it. Mas. Rome semeth to me the verye liuelye and expresse Image of that greate whore, of whome it is written in thapocalypse, who hath made dronke, corrupted, and infected, all the whole worlde with her golden cuppe of hipocrisie, replenished to the very brime with abhominacio and vncleanes, she deceyueth and blyndeth the eyes of all menne, with a pleasaunt outwarde deceytfull shewe of fayned holines, of ceremonies, of beawtie, of ryches, and of aboundaunce of thynges that fade and decaye. But tell on the ende of the disputacion.

1. Peter. v

Apo. xvii.

Lep. When master Fastidicus had spente all hys matter, and sayed what he coulde: Thambassador began to declare howe the holy scripture was directlye agaynst thys primacie. And first he made it playne verye well, that Christe was the chiefe prieste, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedeche. And that he was not of the tribe of Leui, or of the stocke of Aaron, but of the tribe of Juda, and of the stocke of Dauid. And more ouer that he was not chosen, as other menne be: as other chiefe priestes be chosen of other priestes, who doeth not alwaye chose the beste: but that he was chosen of his eternall and heauenly father, when he sayed. Thow art my sonne, this

Hebr. v i.

Psal. ii. Hebr. v.

this daye haue I begotten the. And the other chiefe preestes were anoynted with a materiall oyle: but Christe was anoynted with the holy goost. And they had on suche garmentes as Moses apoynted them by gods commaundement: but thapparell of Christe was the whole company of al vertues. They offered incense, and brute beastes, but Christe offered himselfe vpon the crosse with a spirituall and heauenly excellent swete sauor. They entred the holy of holyes, but Christe entred into heauen, and sitteth now at the right hande of the eternal father, making intercession for vs, obteyning what soeuer he desireth. Whereas before tyme he did put vpon him our infirmities, that by the meanes thereof he might bee earnestly sorowful for our miseries. So that Christ was chiefe preeste after the ordre of Melchisedeche, whiche was muche more excellent, then was the order of Aaron. Neither was he only the sonne of god, vnto whome the spirite is geuen without measure, and all power, and dominion in heauen and in earth, in whome all treasures of wisedome and knowledge of god be hid, who is full of grace and truethe: but in him allo dwelleth a full plentifullnes of all heuenly thynges. And that Christe hathe now taken away Aarons priesthod as a thing vnperfect, and was but a shadow of this, which is more perfecte. So that they nowe maye bee accounted trewe preestes, which be regenerated by Christe, and haue the spirite of god: And them to be the greatter and better preestes, who hathe receaued a greater measure and habundance of that heauenly spirite.

Hebr. v.
Exod. xxviii.
esa. lxi.
Hebr. ix. viii.
esa. liii.
Rom. iii.
Gala. iii.
1. Timo. ii
John. xvii.
1. John. ii.
Hebr. v.
John. iii.
Mat. xxviii.
John. xiii.
Colla. ii.
John. i.
Colla. i.

And al ỹ other to bee prophane & wicked, notwithstãdinge that they bee a thousande tymes anoynted, ordered, and chosen into the numbre of preestes by the

Pope, and hys membres. Wherefore he sayeth eyther ye haue the spyrite or not: yf ye haue not the spirite of God, then bee ye no prieſtes, neyther after the order of Melchiſedech, neither after the order of Aaron, becauſe ye be not of hys family. Therfore canne ye not be prestes but after the order of Beliall, after whose order ye may wel be the chief prieſtes of all. But if ye haue ỹ spirit of god, thē be ye right precious in dede, & hi thal ye thinke to be ỹ highest prieſt of all, who is replenyshed with more habundaunce of the spirite of god. And becauſe that Chriſte onely receaued the spirite without meaſure: he onely muſte be taken for the trewe, onelye, and chiefe highe prest. And for aſmuch as Chriſt onely is full of light, grace, truethe, power, and all heaueniye vertue: it were an extreme wickednes, ydolatrye and abhomination to ſtudy to robbe Chriſte of theſe heauenly giftes, and apoynt them to a mortall manne, and ſo muche the more and greater ſhoulde thabhomination bee, the more we bee aſſuered that Chriſte is the chiefe euerlaſtinge preeſte, as Dauid prophecied, and as it is wrytten to the Hebrewes. Wherefore as the chiefe preſtes of the Jewes died, and another was apointed in hys place, by the meanes whereof they were manye: So this Chriſte oure eternall preeſte, beinge once rayſed from deathe dieth no more, but is aſcended into heauen, where nowe he lyueth and reigneth chiefe preeſte for euer, and is able perfectly to ſaue all thoſe that comme forthe into the ſyght of God truſtinge vpon hys mediacion. It is the office of the chiefe preeſte to put hym ſelfe betwene God and the people, to offer for the ſynnes of menne, to praye for thē, and to purchaſe the fauor of God vnto them.

Pſal cix. Heb. vii.

Bu

But nowe sence Christ hath offered hym selfe vpon the crosse for our synnes, and hath pacified the wrath of God the father for euer, & hath preserued his chose once for all, ỹ we shal not more haue any nede of hygh priestes, whiche shoulde offer agayne for our offences: yf that after all thys we attempt to doe sacryfice agayne for thys ende, it can not bee done with out an exceding great iniury of God, and open contempt of the sacrifice of Christe. We haue no nede at thys present to haue any other mẽ to put themselues betwene vs and god as chiefe priestes: because that wee obteyne all fauour by Christ onely and alone, as by our onely chiefe priest, chief head and mediator, by whose meanes, and for whose sake oure prayer workes and sacrifices be not onely accepted: but our selues also. Wherfore Christ onely and alone is sufficient for vs, neither haue we nede of anye other chiefe priestes, because it is a dignitie that no manne liuinge can vse with out ỹ great offence of God. Who knoweth not that Christ onely is called of the holy goste the head of hys churche: not onely of the churche militaunt, but also of the churche triumphaunt. Wherein he shall reygne for euer vntyll the latter daye of iudgement. Euen as it is necessarye that he shoulde reygne, vntill he hathe put hys enemyes a fote stole to hys feete. Christ wyll haue thys highe dignitie of the supreme head in hys churche reserued full and whole to hym selfe: As he is the true foundacion of hys churche, vnto whom only this dignity worthely agreeth, because he is onely one, whiche as one supreme head hath the fulnes of the treasures, and of the knowledge and wisdome of God, and of his fauoure and all vertue. Thys is he alone who hauynge the spirite with out measure ruleth and gouerneth his churche as an vni-

Heb. x.

1. Tymo. ii.

1. Peter. ii.

Ephe. iiii. Luc. ii. 1. Cor. xv.

uersall head, geuing to other menne, as to his inferiour membres sundrye gyftes and benefites after a certayne proporcion and measure. Wherfore euen as in the spirituall churche of Christe they onely bee trewe priestes, who haue the gyft of the holy ghost powred vpon them, and they be the greater priestes, whiche haue the same in a more plētifull measure: And Christ is the onely chiefe priestе, who hathe the spirite without measure. Of a lyke sort they onely be trewe and lyuelye membres of the bodye of the same churche, whiche haue the spirite of god, and they be more noble and more worthy, who haue the same spirite more aboundauntly. And Christe onely is their head, who chiefely and moste aboundantly hathe the spirite of ꝑ eternall father. Wherfore, in that the bysshop of Rome intendeth to attayne to the dignitie of ꝑ chiefe priest, and supreme head of Christes churche: his studie is nothyng els, but to make himselfe equall with Christ in spirtie, knowledge, vertue, power, and in all other giftes, and graces. Now whether thys be a blasphemous mynde or not iudge you. For that man, which hath not the spirite of god, is not worthie to be called a membre of Christe, or a priestе, or els a christian manne. No, he is not worthie the name of a manne, for hys grenouse offences. Yea he ought to bee banyshed from all christian mennes company, & be excommunicated, from the churche of Christe. Yt can not be without a merueylous heynouse offence, and a deuillishe pride, ones to be so bolde, to desire to haue the title of the supreme head of the churche of Christe.

ephe. iiii

Ephe. iiii. Psal. i. vii. 1. Cor. xii. c

Where as Paule describeth ꝑ true image of ꝑ church of Christe he sayeth: Christe is ascended on highe, and hath gyuen giftes to menne, some to be Apostles some to be Prophetes, some to bee Euangelistes,

and

and some to be Doctors. And it is not to be doubted, but he would also haue ordeined some other supreme head in earthe, yf he had iudged it a thyng necessary. And the holygoost in thys place, (whiche should haue made so muche for thys purpose) woulde not onely haue expressed the thyng by the mouthe of Paule, but also woulde haue named thys chiefe dignitie. When Paule myndeth to persuade the Ephesians to remayne together in one spirite knyt with the bonde of peace, the argumentes, that he vseth, be these, saying: that (yf they be true christiã men) they be the very membres of one body, and they all haue one spirite, euen as they all be called to one ende, and haue one Lorde Jesus Christe, one fayth, one baptisme, one onely god, and eternall father. No doubt he woulde haue also sayed in thys place, (and they haue one Byshope in earth, who kepeth the churche of Christ in order and concorde) yf he had euer mynded to appoynt suche a byshop. ephe.iiii.

Mas. Yf Paule had euer spoken such wordes he had lyed galantly. For the bishops of Rome wil indeuour themselues to the vttermost of their power, to moue cõtencion and to set christian princes together by the eares for their owne inrichynge.

Lepidus. That thyng maye chaunce to bee true. But I praye you let me tell on my tale. Then thimbassador sayed furthermore: yt is not vnknowen vnto you, that when the congregacion of the Corynthians auaunced themselues some time in the name of Peter, some tyme in the name of Paule, and some tyme of Apollo, Paule chid thẽ bitterly for so doing: he sayd not, I wyll not haue you thinke here after ẏ I am the head of the churche, neither yet Apollo, But Peter Cor.i. and.iii.a

onely: But he rather concluded all maner of men and
sayed thus. What were you baptised in the name of
1.Cor.1.b Paule? was Paule euer crucified for you? as though
he had sayed: Truely ye bee neither baptized in the
name of Paule, neither in the name of Peter, neither
of Apollo, neither was there any of thē crucified for
you: but ye be baptized in Christs name only. Only he
offered for you death vpon the crosse. Onely he hath
redemed you, and saued you from sinne. Onely he is
your head, from the which all heauenly giftes descēd.
Only he is your lyghte, youre wisdome, youre lyfe,
your saluacion, and therfore muste ye acknowledge
hym onely and alone to bee youre supreme head, in
whose name only ye must reioyce. And thē to knyt vp
his disputaciō. He sayd not: mā must esteme and take
Apollo, and me for the ministers of Christ, and Peter
Cor.iiii for the lorde and mayster: but putting Peter, and him
selfe, and Apollo altogether he sayed: Man must take
vs as the ministers of Christ. And in thys poynt he
agreeth with the doctrine of Christ, who perceyuing
his Apostles to contend amonge themselues for the
highest place: because they herd saye that James &
John had obteyned a prerogatiue of Christe by the
procurement of theyr mother, that one of them should
sytte at his ryght hande, and the other at hys lefte: he
sayd, ye knowe ryght well that the prynces of nacions
beare lordelye rule, and menne of power doe exercise
their myght ouer them. But it shall not be so amōgest
you. But he, that wyll be greater amongest you, shall
be youre minister, & he, that wyll be chefe amongest
you shalbe your seruannt. For the sonne of manne
came not to bee serued of other, but to serue other
hym selfe, and to geue hys soule for a redempti-
on

on, for many. wherby it is easie to perceiue ꝑ the churc
ch of Christ is al together spiritual. And it is not pos-
sible ꝑ any mā cā be a true priest, neither a true chri-
stian manne in this spirituall churche of Christe, on-
les he haue the spirite of god, and he is to be thought
greater, that is more inriched with strength and ha-
bundaunce of the spirite. So that for asmuche as
Christe onely hathe the greatest plentifulnes of the
spirite, he muste without controuersy be iudged, and
estemed the chiefe, and head preste of al other. Wher-
fore yf the bysshoppe of Rome desier the place of the
chiefe bysshoppe, he muste of necessitie haue greatest
haboundance of the spirite, euen as Christe had, and
then, when he is equall with Christe, he shall also be
chiefe bysshoppe, and chiefe heade equal with Christ:
but this also is necessary to bee knowen that the do-
minion of the spirite is verye diuerse and contrary,
(euē as Christ taught) to ꝯ dominion of ꝯ flesh, for a-
mōgest carnall men, suche as haue more riches, more
strēgth, more fauour amōgest mē, more frēdshipes, &
more nobilitie of bloud, they be ꝯ lordes ouer other,
they cōmaūd, they haue other ministers to thē, they
be honoured and obeyed, & many times they oppresse
the weaker, and vse tyranny ouer them. But it is cō-
trarywise in the spirituall churche of Christe: for
such as haue greater light of the spirite they be high-
er and greater. And they that bee suche, serue all
other by the helpe of the spirite, as menne that hath
receyued greater gyftes of god, more light of know-
ledge, more grace, more spirite and a greater talent.
So that he, which hath receaued more haboūdance
of the spirite helpeth more, and serueth more the ne-
cessities of other, and setteth forthe the glory of god
more

more plentifully. And because Christe had most singular plenty of the spirite, therfore came not he to bee serued, but to serue for the helth of his chosen. Yea & he serued all without exception, and that also humblinge himselfe extremely, vntyll that he (moued of an exceding greate loue) spent hys own life vpon the crosse. Therefore woulde Christe haue it knowen to hys chosen, that yf ye wil haue a trew nobilitie, and worthynes, ye muste haue a spirite. Christe abused not this spirituall greatnes of hys, whiche was in the highest degre of honour: therby to chalenge anye honour before manne, or for thobteynyng of riches, or imperiously to vse the seruice of hys subiectes, neyther to seke for any priuate commoditie, but to serue other, and to seke for the profyt of other. The power therefore, and the greatnes of the ministers of Christe is altogether spiritual, and standeth wholly in the seruice, and gouernaunce of soules helthe. But ỹ bishop of Rome seketh for no other thing thē to be estemed greate before the worlde, that he maye bee worshipped in earthe, as it were a god, and haue lybertie to vse tyranny ouer all churches, to spoyle, and destroy them at his pleasure. Yf the church of Christ wer now as in times paste it was ordeyned to be: he shoulde be thought greater then all the reste, who is indued with more lyght from aboue, and hath receaued more gyftes, and benefites of Goddes hand, and this worthynes of hys woulde he onelye vse in settynge forthe of the gospell, whereby he might wynne as many soules, as myght bee to Christ. So that be it that Christe had geuen the power of the keyes of the kingdome of heauen to Peter onely, and by him to you that be bysshoppes of Rome: (which thinge is

Mat.rr.d.
Mar.r.e
Luc.xxu.b

Phil.ii.a.

not

not trewe): what other power or authoritie shoulde you haue therby (I pray you) then to preach the gospell, then to be witnesses that synnes bee pardoned to them, that beleue, and retayned to thē, that beleue not, then to administer the Sacraments accordynge to Christes institucion, thē to exhorte, to admonysh, to correcte with gentlenes and loue such, as be prone to synne, then to excommunicat (whiche is the chiefe matter of all) suche, as bee open notorious synners, when they amend not after monicion geuen accordinge to the doctrine of Christe, and wyll not obeye the church. Thus farre extendeth your power, and authoritie geuen by Christe and no further, except ye will confound, the boundes, and thorder of the power ciuile, and the power ecclesiastical.

M. This confusion shoulde not our bysshoppe in any wise suffer, and that for two causes. The fyrste, because he will haue all hys power estemed of men to be spirituall and heauenlye, al though he ouer run the whole worlde with his vnbrydled tyranny. The latter: because if he woulde saye that thecclesiasticall power might be mingled and confoūded with power ciuile, he might be afrayed leste haply the Emperor should chalenge thē both, & so be made both Emperor and Pope. I remembre that I haue hearde tel howe Christe was desiered of a fellowe to make deuision of inheritaunce betwene him and hys brother, vnto whome Christe made aunswere, who made me your iudge, who gaue me authority to deuide thinheritaunce betwene you. As thoughe he had sayed: I came not, neither am I sent of my heauenly father, that I should chaleng to me any political power, but spiritual onely. I come to preach vnto you the whole spiritual kyngdome, & to bring you to that highnes of Luc. xii. b.

mynde, that ye shoulde leaue not onelye the worlde but your selfe also for the glory of god, and not to be an arbitrer or iudge of your stryfes.

Yf therfore our Bysshoppe were Pope neuer so much (as he striueth to be) and Christes vicar in earthe, it is very trewe, that he hath no more power or authoritie gyuen hym by Christ, then had Christe himselfe. And therfore whensoeuer there shoulde be any ciuile matters brought before him in iudgement, he should make answere with Christe, who made me youre iudge, or elles who gaue me authoritie to deuide, or put together, to absolue or condempne, by a ciuile fashiō of iudgement. Thys power must come some other waies tlē by Christ. But I feare me muche leste oure popes shall by thys their newe authority bee so much occupied in worldly businesses, ỹ they shal haue no space or time to thinke any whit of God. And more ouer so much shal theyr tyranny increase, ỹ they shall wyllyngly desire and drawe to themselues and to their iudgemente seates, all maner of controuersies not to make an ende of them, but to inuolue them, and make them more doubtfull, by the meanes whereof the sewtes indure the longer. And furthermore whē they be once made dronke with the bloud of martyrs they wyll sow deadly discorde and continuall contencion amongest christian princes, and wyll bee the authors almeste of all warres whiche shall continue for manye yeres. For it is not possyble that common welthes should be quyet, where they shall haue rule. But I pray you tell me in good earnest, brought the embassador any other authoritie of scripture agaynst the Popeshyppe?

Lep. He brought amōgest other as farre as I remē-

ber

ber thautorite of Sayncte Paule, who wrote to the Galathians that Peter was the Apostle of the Jues, euen as Paule was of the Gentiles. Wherefore he was neither the Apostle (sayed he) neither the Pope of Rome, neither anye of other nacions, but of the Jewes onely. Neither was he vniuersall Bysshoppe of all cristendome, neither you, that be the bysshops of Rome be the successors of Peter, because ye be not the Apostles nor bishops of the Jewes. But Paule shoulde rather haue bene Pope of the gentiles, and so much ꝑ more aboue Peter, bicause that ꝑ gētiles, of whom Paule was the Apostle, were moe in numbre then were the Jewes, and moe of the Gentiles were conuerted to Christe, then of the Jewes. And Paule preached also in sundry places of the world, & brought forthe the fruite of the gospell more plentifully then dyd Peter, wherfore he was an Apostle more vniuersall, and more profitable also to the churche of Christ. And Paule more ouer addeth thys thyng in the same place, that he had no lesse grace, beinge the Apostle of the Gentiles, then Peter had being the Apostle of the Jewes. Then was not Peter a greater Apostle then Paule was. And so consequentlye doethe it folowe, that he not hys head, yea and Paule doeth playnlye call hym, in speciall wordes, felowe, euen as he dyd bothe James and John. And Peter also wrytynge to the pastors of other churches commaundeth them not imperiouslye, as though he were their superior, but exhorteth them gently, as hys felowes, callynge Christe, and not hym selfe the chiefe Pastor. And furthermore when he was rebuked of Paule, he sayed not that he was aboue all lawes, and coulde not erre because he was Pope: but gaue place to Paule when

Gala. ii. b

i. Peter. v.

Gala. ii.

Acts. viii.

he was checked of hym openlye. And also when he was sent by the apostles in to Samaria he withstod them not. He sayed not, it is my office to commaunde, I haue authoritie to send, whom I will, or els to goe my wayes yf it please me: for I am youre head: But he obeyed their commaundementes as a membre of the churche of Christ. And when thimbassadors would haue folowed hys matter that he intended more at large, and haue brought moe places of scripture for the vtter subuercion of all the popship: Then master Falsidicus thinkyng hymselfe not well handled with thimbassadors manyfolde and stronge reasons interruptyng his tale, past all good maners, as a mad man in hys fury cryed out with loud voyce and sayed: Ye of the East churches bee full of sectes and heresies. And therfore haue you of all other most nede of a supreme & visible head in yearth, by whose authoritie & wisdom ye may be gouerned, by whom the cõtencions that arise amongest you for sundrye interpretacions of scripture maye be pacified, ỹ thig being declared & opened by the censure and iudgemente of the chiefe Bysshoppe, by the whiche meanes ye myghte knowe the trueth, and remayne firme and stable in the trewe fayth quietly. For thys cause shoulde you chiefely desire thys supreme head and gouernoure, who nowe labour to hynder ỹ thyng for lacke of knowlage of ỹ profit, that shall ensewe. And therfore can I not stey my selfe, but must a litle passe the bondes of pacience and speake my mind frely. Yf the whole matter were put to me, I know what I had to doe. I say no more. To these wordes thimbassador aunswered quietlye. Master Falsidicus: ye say yf the whole matter were put to you, ye knowe what ye had to doe. Bycause

these

these wordes maye bee taken diuerslye, seinge you expoūde them not your selfe, there is none of vs, that can well tel what ye meane by thē, some may peraduenture gesse, but none cā haue any certain assuraūce. So that you onelye knowe what is ment by them, euen as Paule wrote: What manne is he liuinge, that knoweth the inward partes, thinwarde thoughtes, desiers, and craftes of man, excepte it bee the spirit of man, that dwelleth within him. Euē so because men see not thinwarde thoughtes of menne, they vnderstande not to what ende theyr wordes tende, & therefore is it no meruayle, yf they atteyne not the perfect knoweledge of those thinges, that be spoken, namely when the wordes be douteful and ambigouse. Therfore with what face dareth the byshop of Rome beinge a mortall manne, chalenge vnto him authoritie and iudgement to expounde the worde of God, as it shall please hym: and to force menne to folowe his exposicion, be it ryght or wronge. Yt was the holye ghoste, and not Peter, that opened the mindes of thapostles, whereby they myght vnderstande the holy scriptures: and he taught them all his whole wyll as Christ promysed before, and as Esay did wryte, they were taught of god, and the lawe of god was prynted in theyr stomakes, and written in theyr hartes frō aboue, as Hieremie prophecied longe before, & John shadowed thesame thinge sayinge. Ye haue no nede of any mannes helpe whereby to learne: for thanoyntinge it selfe, that is to saye the holy goste, shall teach you all truethe. The holy goste is the trewest teacher of al other, and one that performeth his promes most haboundantly. He is no lyar, as men be, that breake theyr faythe and promes, it is he onely that canne de-

i. Cor. ii.

Luk. xxiiii.
Jhon. xiiii.
Esa. vi.

Jerme. xxxii.
i. Jhon. ii.

clare the trew sence of the holy scripture, it is he only that can open the myndes of menne, that canne teach, strengthen, and stablysshe vs in all trueth, and not the bishops of Rome. And if you would say that the pope being lightened by the holy goost geueth light to vs: I will answere fyrst. The Pope is not alone lightened with the light of the holy goste. For ỹ holy goste inspireth where as it pleaseth him, and destributeth his giftes amongest men, to euery one as hys will is. Wherefore mens consciences must not bee bounden and tyed to beleue and thinke that the pope only hath the holy goste, that the pope only can not erre, that the pope onely is aboue the worde of god, that the pope only must be the interpreter, the declarer and ruler of holy scripture, and that all we muste in all pointes obeye the popes iudgement. Because that this is ones suer, that visible thynges canne bringe no inwarde lyghte, nor confirme menne in theyr faythe, and quiet and pacify theyr consciences, but the holy goost only canne performe al these thinges, plentifully. What nedeth many wordes? he is very Antichriste, whiche boasteth himself that he canne geue light to the mind either by an inwarde lyght, or by some other meanes then by therpresse worde of God, as the minister of the worde, by good example of lyfe, and continuall prayer. Yf all we should stande or fall by the iudgement of the pope, why is there so much labor spent in gatheringe together of counselles? Why spende we our lyues with so muche paine in study for knowledge? in turninge our bokes? yf we shall leane to the onely worde of the pope. Then in the name of god let vs be short, let vs come to the pope, & heare his word as it were an Oracle, and let vs worshipp him as a god. But Paule the Apostle teacheth farre after another

1. Cor. xii.
John. iii.

sorte

sorte, when he commaundeth two or thre to speake
in the churche in order one after another, and the rest
diligentlye to waye the iudgementes of them that 1.Cor.xiiii.
speake. And so the iudgement of Ecclesiasticall mat-
ters muste be sought for at the church, it selfe and not
at the pope of Rome. And further Paule willeth in
especiall wordes, that when one of the members of
the churche speaketh, the truethe bee reueled to ano-
ther, that sitteth by: hym that spake fyrste to holde
hys peace (thoughe he were Pope) and gyue eare
vnto the latter, vnto whome the truethe is disclosed
thoughe he bee one of the baleft sorte and vnlerned. Mat.vi.
For many tymes god hydeth the secretes of his wis- 1.Cor.iii
dome from the prudent and wyse of thys worlde, 1.Cor.ii.
and openeth the same to lytle ones. And in another Esa.xxix.c
place he maketh Peter equall with the reste sayinge:
All thinges be yours, whether it be Paule, or Apol-
lo, or Peter, as thoughe he shoulde saye, let none bee
youre superiors besides Christe and hys worde: for
Peter, and Paule bee youre ministers. Yea and
Peter in the fyrst councell of the Apostles harkened Act.xv.
to other declarynge hys owne iudgement in that
poynt, and geuynge authorytye to the churche to
doe, what they shoulde thinke good, and willinglye
and gladlye to obeye the iudgement, which the whole Luk.xxii.
congregacion approueth to be perfecte and suer. And
although Christ sayed, I haue prayed for thee Pe-
ter, that thy fayethe should not fayle, yet foloweth it
not therefore that Peter coulde not erre. For he er-
red after that tyme sundrye tymes, and namely whē
he expressely denyed Christe the sonne of God. But
when Christe perceyued Peters temerous boldnes,
& ỹ shortly after he would shamefully denye him, to

arme

arme and strengthen hym agaynste the temptacion, which shoulde insewe, lest the greatnes of the fault myght hurle hym downe into desperacion: he sayed vnto them: Satan goeth about to sift you like chaffe and to vndoe, and destroye you. Yea you had bene all ready vtterly lost yf I had not praied for you, and for the especially Peter by name, that thy faythe should not fayle, beecause thou wylt fall foulier then the rest, and I knowe that God hathe herd my prayer. For althoughe thou wilt denye me with thy mouthe, yet thou wylt not deny me with thyne heart. Thou wylt synne, but synne shall not reygne in the, so that in thy heart thou shalt yeld to noughtie temptacions. I wyll suffre thee to haue a foule fall, that by the meanes therof thy temerous boldnes maye be bridelled and rebuked. And againe that after when thou shalt come to thy selfe, and perceyue thy owne infirmitie, thy hearte shall bee touched with compassion agaynst those that shall synne, reysing them vp with knowledge, and cõfirming, and boldning them with thyne example. Nowe canne I not perceyue howe it maye be proued by the wordes before rehersed, that Peter was Pope, and could not erre afterward, neither the Bysshops of Rome after hym accordyng to his example.

Luc. xxii. c

Mas. Wee shall wrythe all the wordes that euer Christe spake to Peter, to make for the Popeship of Rome: let vs writhe them also when Peter counseled Christ to forsake the crosse saying: Saue thy selfe O Lorde.

Mat. xvi.

Lepi. What aunswere then made Christ?

Mas. He sayed vnto hym: get the out of my sighte Sathan, thou troublest me, thou hast no perseue-

raunce

raunce of thinges belongynge to god, but to manne onely it is easyto proue that Peter whas chiefe head of oure byshops of Rome, and they hys successours, takinge it of this fashion, but tell for the on the disputacion, I woulde fayne heare the ende of it.

Lepi. This embassadour of Constantinople would fayne haue brought other reasons forthe, and other sayinges of scripture against our popeshippe: but the Emperoure moued by oure byshope wylled hym to holde hys peace, and commaunded the other imbassadours, that they shoulde also saye theyr myndes.

The embassadore of Antioche.

Then the Embassadoure of Antioche spake in thys wise. Because me thinketh it sufficientlye declared that holy scripture doeth not onely not stablishe the primacie of Peter, but also seme quite contrary therunto: I will speake my mynde brefiye as I am commaunded, neither will I bringe any moe reasons, or argumentes then thys one, although it bee easy to fynde a number. Be it that we graunted Peter to be the vniuersall byshope ordeyned of Christe ouer hys churche (whiche thinge is not trewe) yet muste it not therefore bee graunted that the byshoppes of Rome ought to bee popes, but rather our byshoppes of Antioche oughte to be the chiefe, and vniuersall byshoppes. Because that our byshops, and not the byshop of Rome were the successours of Peter. For Peter was byshop of Antioche, and so vnlykely a thynge is it that Peter was euer at Rome. To this argument maister Pseudologus made aunswere in the name of our pope, cryying out w a loude voice vntill his sides cracked again, saying. Peter was here our byshop in Rome, & our pope. xx. yeares together cõtinually,

and

and in this same citie was he afterwarde crucified. Then Thimbasadour aunswered. I prety rewarde, for paynes taken in preachinge. But tell me I praye you. In what place of scripture fynde you that he was euer at Rome? Then aunswered master Pseudologus: In no place of scripture quod he. But it may well be founde in our Historiographers, and in many other bokes of our byshoppes. and other holy menne. Whereunto thimbassadoure aunswered. Then howe knowe you by the worde of god, that your byshoppes of Rome be the chiefe vniuersall byshoppes of the churche of Christe, if ye haue not that in holy scripture, that Peter was euer at Rome? Trewely if ye intend to proue youre byshoppes to bee popes by the word of God: ye muste fyrste proue by the same worde that Peter was ordeyned of Christe the vniuersall heade of his whole churche. And then must ye proue by the worde of god, that Christe vndoutedly gaue the same authoritie to Peter to make the byshoppes of Rome after hym chiefe byshops by continuall succession, and laste of all it muste be proued by suer authoritie of the worde of god, that Peter was at Rome. and byshoppe of that citie, and dyed there. These thinges done ye might well beleue that youre byshoppes were popes by the word de of God. But there is not one of these thre thinges, that ye cā proue by scripture, especially the seconde & the thyrd, as ye youre selfes doe confesse. Wherefore I canne not see with what face ye canne beare downe so manifest a lye. Then master Pseudologus sayd. We know that our byshop is pope, & that with a fulnes of power, & we knowe that he hathe receaued thys authoritie of Christe by the meanes of .S. Peter, and not of man

wherefore

wherefore we knowe him to bee pope by the lawe of god, and not by the lawe of manne, and we will also holde, and beleue thys trueth as an article of oure faithe notwithstandinge that none of these thinges before rehersed can be proued by thauthoritie of holy scripture. Then sayed thimbassadour.

Because wee all bee bounde to beleue the articles of our faythe, as the foundacions, and chiefe principles of our religion, it is nedefull that they appeare moste playnly by scripture. And you wyll sette fire, and tormentes before the whole worlde, to make men beleue that thynge, whiche by your owne confession can not be proued by the authoritie of the holye scriptures. Where I praye you can menne laye the foundacion of their fayth, yf they be compelled to beleue, and to confesse as a necessary article of their fayth, your Bysshoppe to be the vniuersall head of the churche of Christ, when there is not one word therof in the holy scripture. Yt is an intolerable tirāny, the like whereof hath not bene herd to bynde the conscience of men to receyue so manyfest a lye for an article of their fayth, seing it can not onely not be proued by goddes worde, but also all the whole scripture is agaynst it. You ought to be content to binde men to beleue that the Pope hathe the highest authorite of all. But ye wyll further compel them to beleue that, that power, and authoritie cōmeth fullye, and wholly from God, and not from manne, although that thyng can in no wyse be proued by scripture. Furthermore he would haue it be beleued that it maye bee proued by holye scripture that oure Bysshoppe was Pope, when you your selues be forced to graunte that it can not bee proued by holy scripture, ꝑ Peter was euer at Rome.

Of thys chiefe and vniuersall bysshoprike of your bysshoppe ye can haue none other opinion, but that it is a deuise of manne, seing the contrary can not be proued by the worde of God: And you wyll haue it receyued for an article of ỹ faith, and that it shal be beleued with an heauenly faythe. Yf ye bee not sure whether Peter were euer at Rome, or not, for the whiche cause ye chaleng your bysshoppe to be chiefe, and the successor of Peter, how can ye haue certayne knowledge of thys your chiefe Bysshoprike, but vpon the saying of men onely who naturally be lyars? To thys master Pseudologus made aunswere. The men which sayd that Peter was at Rome were the chiefe bysshoppes of all other, and therfore coulde they not lye, when they so sayed. Wherefore we be sure and certayne of our popeshippe. Then the imbassador sayed: Ye take for a grounde that thyng, whiche ye had most nede to proue. That is, that your Bisshoppes were chiefe Bysshoppes: and then, agayne that they coulde not erre, bothe the whiche poyntes I vtterlye denye. Yf ye would say, some saynctes affirme Peter some tyme to haue bene at Rome. I woulde streight make answere that I knewe not whether they were Saynctes or not, for that there is no worde thereof in scripture. But ye wyll peraduenture saye, they were canonized of oure chiefe Bysshoppes, whiche coulde not erre: to that wyll I aunswere as before, that ye take that thynge for your proofe, whiche remayneth first to to be proued. Yea and more ouer wyll I saye, be it that ye were assured that they were Saynctes, yet must it be graunted that Saynctes haue sometyme erred. And so it maye be that they erred euen the very same time, whē they sayd Peter was once at Rome. Namely the thyng being spoken of them, not to that

rude

ende that it shoulde be receyued for an article of oure fayth necessary for saluacion, as your mynde is: thus by all meanes be you in an errour. But let vs graunte that there hath bene some reuelacion touchyng thys poynt, surely I must nedes thynke that it was an elusion of the deuill. Yea be it that it were God hym selfe, which had reueled the same thyng vnto you, & that it were trueth in dede, ỹ it was a reuelacion frome god: yet because there is no worde in all scripture of the thinge, neyther haue other menne this reuelacion of yours, ye shoulde in no wise force menne to beleue this your popeshippe, as an article of theyr fayethe. And furthermore I will proue by strong reasons, that these historiographers of yours, these byshopes, and saynctes, whiche wrote that Peter was the chiefe byshoppe at Rome, and was put to deathe in ỹ same citie, lyed vnreasonably. And fyrst of all tell me in good fayethe. What tyme say they that Peter was at Rome: and howe long dwelt he there? Therunto aũswered Pseudologus. That he came to Rome the seconde yere of Claudius themperoure, and was made byshoppe there, and dwelt there .xxv. yeres, by whose preachinge Rome was brought to the fayethe of Chriſte, as both Eusebius, and .S. Hierome hath wrytten. Then aunswered thimbassadour. Thys is once playne (quod he) ỹ Chriſte suffered vpõ ỹ crosse .xviii. yere of Tiberius themperour, who reigned .xxiii. yeres. After hym succeded Caius and reygned .iiii. yere. Then folowed afterwarde Claudius. Nowe then yf Peter came to Rome the seconde yere of Claudius, ye muste nedes graunt that Peter came to Rome within .xi. yeres after Chriſtes deathe. Agayne on the other side: it is playne by the wordes of holye

That Peter was not at Rome.

scripture, that Paule was not onely not conuerted to the faythe when Christe suffered vpon the crosse, but it appereth also that he was not conuerted, when Stephane was stoned. Because the scripture is playne that he kepte theyr garmentes, whiche stoned Stephã to death. This being so, Paule himselfe writeth to the Galathians ỹ he came to Hierusalẽ .xvii. yeres after he was conuerted, and that then he founde Peter there. Thys was at the leste the. xviii. yere after the deathe of Christe. Then if Peter were yet at Hierusalem .xviii. yeres after the deathe of Christe, how can it bee that he came to Rome the seconde yere of Claudius, as you saye, whiche was theleuenthe yere after Christes deathe. Ye you youre selues maye easely perceaue when ye saye so, that ye speake directlye agaynste the manyfelte wordes of the scripture. Furthermore Peter was at Hierusalem, not onely eightene yeres after the deathe of Christe, but thesame tyme also was he sent to preache the gospell not to the Romans but to the Jewes. And it is to bee beleued that he preached ỹ gospell amongest the Jewes. And Paule also in thesame epistle, which he wrote to the Romans, because he saluteth a great many there by name, trewly he woulde haue saluted Peter also, if he had then bene the chiefe bysshoppe there, as you contende. Wherefore it is easy to be proued that it is a very false lye, that youre Historiographers doe wryte. But to say the truethe, they, that be named to wryte thys gear, be not the authors thereof, but they bee youre lyes, whiche you haue annexed maliciously to theyr bokes directly repugninge to the manifeste authoritie of the holy scripture. Then master Pseudo*lo*gus brought forthe a very olde booke, that saye

Gala. ii.

Roma. xvi. b

by hym, so olde that it was eaten with mothes, and wormes, wherein there were certayne Epistles I canne not tell what, wryten by Clement, as he sayed, whome he iudged the fyrste byshoppe of Rome after Peter. In these letters wrytten by thesame Clement to James byshoppe of Hierusalem this thinge was conteyned, howe Peter beinge at Rome, and perceaunynge death drawe nere, in the presence of a number of Christian menne, toke Clement by the hand, and in the hearing of them all sayed. Brethren, my death is now at hande, as Christe hathe reueled vnto me. Wherefore I ordeyne thys Clement youre byshop, vnto whome onely I deliuer my seate, and the preachinge of my doctrine, into whome onely I translate the same power of loosinge and byndinge, whiche I receaued of Christe. Then sayed Pseudologus. Loe here maye you see howe that Peter was at Rome, and ordeyned Clement byshoppe after hym, and set him in hys seate, grauntinge him hys full authoritie. Then thimbassadour would see and reade those epistles, & when he had red and weied them he sayd matter myne Pseudologus. Ye can not cloke youre lyes so craftely, but they will apeare as they bee, that is to say, lyes, euen at the fyrste sight. For these epistles of youres bee nothinge els but fayninges of youre owne without authoritye, full of vanyties and lyes. And that it is trew, I say, hereby it maye appere, that euen by youre owne Historyographers Linus folowed Peter, and not Clemente.

And after Linus folowed Anacletus, & afterwarde Clement. Who is numbred to bee the fourthe after Peter, and yet would you falsely place hym to be the

seconde

secoumde. And moze ouer by youre owne historiographers, yf ye wyll account the course of the times as ye shoulde, ye shall finde that James was dead seuen yeares before your Clement was Bysshoppe: wherefore I can not saye by what reason he coulde writ to James beinge dead. And agayne euen in the first beginning of the salutacion, he calleth hym Bysshoppe of bysshoppes, who should gouerne not onelye the churche of the Jewes at Hierusalem, but also all other churches. And yf James were then Pope, trewely then was not Peter Pope, and therefore could he not make Clement Pope after hym, neither by Clemente his successours. And moze ouer euen by the same very wordes, that ye alledge, that Peter shoulde saye to Clement before hys death, it can not be proued that Clement was ordeyned vniuersall Bysshoppe of all churches: but onelye the bysshoppe of the church of Rome. Besides this, if Clement was made Bysshoppe of Rome by Peter, as you saye he was, and not chosen of the people, no doubt hys successors woulde haue folowed the same example, whiche thyng they dyd not, and therefore it is false that Peter made hym Bysshoppe. I will passe ouer that neither Eusebius, neither Hierome, number these Epistles amongest Clementes workes. Yea & Clement hym selfe in these Epistles prayseth a boke that he shoulde write, the title wherof is Itinerarium Clementis, whiche boke of trueth was neuer of hys makynge. And furthermoze thys boke maketh mencion of dioceses, archbysshoppikes, primacies, and bishoppikes, whiche orders, and names were not yet distincted and appoynted out, neyther doeth he anye thyng els in these Epistles, but set forth the dignitie

Distinct. xv. Sancta Romana eccles.

and

and fredome, of prieſtes: whome he wyll haue ſo free, that they ſhall not intermedle themſelues with anye handycraft, for a proſe of the which abſurditie he citeth certayne places of holye ſcriptures wrythed beyond the nocke. More ouer in his ſecond Epiſtle he is ſo bolde to teach Iames of what ſorte he ſhoulde miniſter the Sacramentes. And yet that fachiō is not obſerued thys daye, namely in the adminiſtracion of the lordes ſupper. Furthermore none of the auncient writers make any mencion of theſe Epiſtles, neither yet of them ỹ Anacletus or Euariſtus ſhould wryte. He citeth out of the newe, and olde teſtament that it is not laweful for prieſtes to ſacrifice or ſyng maſſe, but when the Bychoppe commaundeth them. which thynge can neither be founde in the newe, neither in the olde teſtament. In the fyft Epiſtle he affirmeth that all thynges, wyfes and other, ſhoulde be common, and that yf it be not ſo it commeth of the wyckednes of menne. There bee alſo in theſame Epiſtles many other foliche thynges and lyes, whiche he reherſed, but bycauſe ye maye read them your ſelfe, I wyll reherſe no more. Maſter Pſeudologus ſhewed alſo certeyne other epiſtles wrytten as he ſayed by Anacletus and Euariſtus, whereby he minded to ſtablyſh this popeſhippe. But thimbaſſadour proued by good reaſons that they all were of none authoritie, becauſe that it is conteined in them that Clement ſhould be his predeceſſor, which thing Hierome denieth, & alſo Ireneus. Further, he would not ỹ prieſtes ſhould be accuſed, or iudged, for a proſe wherof allegeth ỹ ſcriptures with out iudgemēt or reaſō, he wil haue Bychoppes iudges in ſeculer matters, and that euery manne maye apeale to them. When it is well

knowen that, that thynge was neuer graunted vnto them before the tyme of Theodosius the Emperour, and agayne he sayeth that Cephas signifieth a head, where as in dede it signifieth a stone. And furthermore I can proue the Epistles of Euaristus to be of none authoritie, not onely by that he bryngeth manye sentences of scripture sasly writhed ẏ priestes should not be accused of any lay mē: but also because he writeth ad Gallium, & Barduā, two Counsels, in whose tyme Anacletus was Byshop of Rome, & not Euaristus which thing is euident by the histories. Master Pseudologus blushed, & was ashamed wonderfully, when these thinges were layd to his charge, because he appeared openlye to all mens sight to haue played a false parte, whiche thinge, when the embassador of Antioche perceyued, he left hym as he was, and gaue place to the imbassador of Hierusalē, who spake than wonderfully in this wise. There is no doubt but that Christ, who was the chiefe and vniuersall Byshop of hys churche, preached his gospell chiefely at Hierusalē, in ẏ which place he was contented to dye for our sakes. And this is also certaine, ẏ James succeded in hys roume, who was nexte Byshoppe in Hierusalem after Christ. Wherfore yf there shoulde be any supreme, vniuersall, and visible head stablished in yearth of the church of Christ militant (because it is sufficiently proued that Peter was not the chiefe Byshoppe) our Byshoppes of Hierusalem oughte to be Popes and not the Byshoppes of Rome. For you woulde haue your Byshoppes of Rome to be Popes because of none other reason, but that they succeded Peter: we maye muche the better chalenge oure Byshoppes of Hierusalem to bee chiefe Byshoppes, because they succeded

The imbassador of Hierusalem.

succeded Christ, in so muche as Christ is greater, and more excellente then Peter. As touching Christe it is knowen ryght well that he was the vniuersall head of hys churche, and that he was crucified in Hierusalem. And more ouer not onely Paule nameth James first before Peter and John: but also in the first counsell of the Apostles, where as Peter, Paule, Barnabas, and the rest of the Apostles speake, he as their heade and iudge, sayed his mynde laste, whiche was aproued of all thapostles, and of the whole congregation. And it is not to be doubted but that, if the church of Hierusalem be the mother, (as she is in dede) of all other churches, and of whome all other churches had theyr beginninge, wherefore she ought to bee called mother, as it was determyned in Nicene counsell: Then muste the bysshop of Hierusalem, as the spouse of the churche be called the vniuersall father of all other churches, and the chiefe bysshoppe, and bysshoppe ouer all other bysshops, as your Clement calleth hym in hys fyrste epistle, if it bee hys as you doe alledge, Then thus he sayed: These wordes haue I spoken, not that I thinke oure bysshoppes to bee highest by any meanes (for Christe onely is thuniuersall head of hys churche, who is onelye sufficient) but to declare vnto you by a certayne suer reason, if there muste bee anye supreme heade in earthe, the same ought rather by right belonge to our bysshop, then to the bysshop of Rome. Ye maye nowe see howe muche vanitie there is in your reasons, when our reasons bee so slender and yet better then yours. For Christe made neither Peter, neither James ỹ supreme head of his churche And yet in the fyrste counsell of the Apostles James sayed hys mynde laste as bysshop of Hierusalem, and Gala. ii. Gala. ii.

Paule nameth hym before Peter, and John. But it followeth not therefore that he was vniuersall bysshop aboue all other bysshops. Notwithstanding this one thinge is trewe, that our churche muste be called the mother of all other churches, not that it ought to gouerne all other churches, as you make your argument. Whiche thinge canne not be: but because all other churches, had theyr originall and fyrste begynnynge of it. Wherefore oure bysshoppes haue the fyrst place in the counsell appoynted vnto them, and bee called bishops of the fyrst seate, because of the estimacion of the citie, wherein Christe was put to deathe. But they muste not therefore bee called the bysshops of other bysshoppes, and the vniuersall heades of the churche of Christe. The imbassadour of Alexandrya, interrupted thys imbassadour of hys tale sayinge. What nede we so many wordes in so playne a matter? Yf the bysshoppes of Rome had receaued thys authoritie at Christes hand, ỹ they should be chief bysshops & gouernours of al other bishops, as you say, al churches and theyr bysshops with thē (the church of Rome onely excepted) had ben from the deathe of christe vntill thys daye euer styll heretikes, and scismatikes, because they neuer acknowledged hym to be theyr supreme heade. And moreouer all counsels, whiche hathe ben holden vntill this day, should haue bene but deuelish metynges, because they neyther allowed, neither declared the bysshoppe of Rome to be Christes vicar, and the supreme head of hys church. But Nicene counsell chiefly, shoulde haue ben deuelyshe, not onely because it gaue not the fyrste place to the bysshope of Rome, but the fourth: but also much more

The imbassadour of Alexandria.

more because they toke so greate, and so heauenly a power awaye from hym, the best parte whereof they gaue to oure byshoppe of Alexandria, who had the charge committed vnto hym of the churches in the Easte parties, vnto whome he was appoynted gouernor. And the counsell of Affrike should haue passed all other in heresie, wherein it was establyshed, that the byshop of the fyrste seat ought not to be called the heade priest, chiefe byshoppe, neither by anye such lyke tytle, but chiefely because there was an ordinaunce made in expresse wordes, that the byshop of Rome by name muste not be called the vniuersall byshop. This is very certayne, if the byshopes reteyned thys monarchie of god: then were these counselles deuelyshe, whyche toke thys diuine power away from them. Cyprian also shoulde haue bene an heretike, not onelye because he callethe the Byshop of Rome brother in hys epistles, which he wrot vnto him, but muche more because he mayntayneth with S. Augustine, that there is none, which is byshop of other byshops: and that it is a greate tyranny to desier to be lorde ouer other byshoppes. And also youre S. Gregory shoulde not onely not haue ben a sayncte, but also an extreme wicked and a condempned parsone. For he wryteth expresly, that he which, woulde bee byshop of all other byshoppes, shall not haue the place of Christ in earthe, but of Lucifer: and shalbee very antichriste hymselfe. And further he bryngeth in a number of inconueniences, whiche shoulde insewe, yf the byshoppe of Rome shoulde take vpon hym the dygnitie of the chyefe byshoppe, as thoughe it were by the lawe of god.

Then thus he sayed: Seing then that thys your pri-
macie is not godly, nor of God, ye must of force graūt
that it is either of manne, or els of the deuill. But it is
not of manne, as I wyll proue by stronge reasons:
wherfore it is of the deuyll. That it is not of manne
thys wyll I proue. The Emperour hymselfe can not
gyue vnto you anye spirituall power. For you youre
selues graunte that thys dignitie, whiche ye haue is
not geuen you of the Emperour but of Christ. Wher-
fore ye must acknowledge Christ to be your supreme
head, as all other Bychoppes doth, who confesse not
that they receyued thys spirituall authoritie, that they
haue, either of the Bychoppe of Rome, or elles of the
Emperour, but of Christe onely. So that the Empe-
rour can not gyue vnto you any dominion, or power,
sauinge that, whiche is temporall, and that onely in
suche countreyes as be vnder hys gouernaunce. Se-
ing then he hathe no dominion either in Asia, or eles
in Affrike: He cā not make you superiours to vs, ney-
ther haue we anye nede to haue you to be our gouer-
nours, the princes, that we haue be sufficient for our
tuicion. He maye gyue vnto you some temporall
power: but yet only in such prouices as be vnder him
in Europa, but he can not gyue you the chiefe place,
onles he will willingly forsake his empire, & sette you
in hys place, and make you aboue hym selfe. Ye crye,
and saye that ye be Christes Vicars: truely yf ye be
Iohn. vi. b Christes Vicars, ye would indeuour your selues car-
nestly to folowe hym. When the Iewes would haue
made hym a kynge, he fled and wouide not receyue
that dignitie. But you be farre from folowynge hys
example, whose Vicars ye seme to be, that ye procu-
red wonderful ambitiously thys chiefe supreme dyg-
nitie

nitie, contrary the expresse worde of Christ, who perceyuing the Apostles to contēd, which of them should be aboue other, he sayed vnto them playnly, he would not haue them stryue to be lordes, and beare rule, as the princes of thys world, but rather to serue. Christ him selfe as longe, as he was here in earthe, woulde take no temporall dominion vpon him, that he might holly be bent to the sauinge of soules, and that no let shoulde hinder him in settinge forthe the Gospel. But you, as though ye were superiours to Christ, will like tyrauntes with the offence of all the whole worlde chalenge vnto you an vniuersall dominiō. Seing thē thys primacie of yours, is neither of God, neither of manne, ye must nedes graunt, that it is of the deuil. Wherfore we all, as many as be here together, protest with one assent, and voyce, in the name of oure churches that we wyll not admit thys primacie, we alow it not, neither wil graūt we therūto. But vtterlye, and exepresly we condempne it, we wyll not obey it, but wil withstād this vnbridled terannye of yours to the vttermost of our powers. Then arose master Gooplanus a stout proctour of the Pope, & thus he began. Our chiefe bishop (quod he) hath not takē this high dignitie vpon hym to the intent to offende you, spoile you, or to excercise any terāny ouer you, but onlye to defende you, to endewe you with honor, and to profit you, and to enriche you with benefices, titles, dignities, priuileges, immunities, benedictions, stacions, absoluciōs, dispēsaciōs, pardōs, suffrages, & Jubilies, in the whiche thynges he wyll serue you all, he wylbe the seruaūte of the seruaūtes of god, wherfore ye ought not to withstande hym in a thynge so profitable vnto you. To thys the same imbassador

Math. xx. c
Mar. ix. d. x. c
Lu. ix. c. xx. d
i. Peter. v. a
John. xviii. c
Math. xx. d

aunswered

aunswered saying: As longe as ye can not proue by vnaunswerable argumentes that youre Bysshoppe is equal with Christ, in spirite and loue, we wyll neuer assent that he shalbe oure Bysshoppe, and supreme head. Yf ye wyll haue vs to acknowledge hym not onely to be our chiefe Bysshoppe, but also oure chiefe prince (as by youre argumentes ye appeare to goe about) and that we ought to beleue that he may chalenge vnto hym both the authorities, ecclesiastical, and ciuill: ye must of necessitie first shewe that he is aboue Christe in wysdome, power, and loue, bycause it is well knowen that Christ woulde in no wise take vpon hym any ciuile gouernaunce, in thys worlde. We be affrayed of so monstrous, and horrible a head. Wherfore we can not allowe this authoritie, neither that he shoulde be oure superior. Yf you intende to admit hym, take heede ye be not to hastie, for ye shall perceyue, to your vtter vndoinge, that he is no shepeherd, but a bloudie woulfe. Then arose master Thrasibulus so sodenly, & so fearsly that it appeared he coulde stare hym selfe no longer. And beinge indewed with a wonderful power, stoutnes, violence, and fury: thus he sayed. What nede we haue so many wordes for the defence of oure Popeshypppe, seynge there hath bene brought strōg reasons enoughe to ouercome the grossest witte in the worlde, in so muche that a blynde man maye see the truethe of them. Wherfore bycause these our reasons, our pleasures, our gentylnes, and fayre promises, can not content them, our moste holye father must vse hys large and endeles authoritie. And then turnyng hymselfe and speakyng to the Pope he sayed. You moste holy father bee the supreme head of the churche of Christe,

and

& therefore be you aboue all other parsons, men, Angels, reasons, holy scriptures, authorities, yea and aboue the whole world. There is no man may iudge you, or elles cõmaunde you, for so it is come to passe: Nowe ye be Pope, and being Pope ye can not erre. Therfore onely saye thus: We be Pope, and we wyll be Pope, and it is ynoughe. Your power and authoritie is so greate, that if ye wer not pope, (if yet ye once pronounced these wordes: we wilbe) ye should be out of hande. Then loking vpon the imbassadors with a fearce countenance, he sayed: Yf ye wilbe rebelles to hys holines, ye shall feele the lightninges, and thunderboltes of his excõmunications and curssinges flye in the ayer, euen to the furthest countrye in the Easte, and then shall ye knowe whether he bee pope or not. Moreouer we shal haue Cesars helpe and fauor ioyned to our strengthes, so that all we coupled in one will defende the popes authoritie with our swoorde. Then all the imbassadours arose at once, to aunswer this sayinge with one accorde, but there was a signe made to the popes chaplayne that he shoulde doe as he was bidden, and straighte waye he beganne with a loud voyce, the himne: Te Deum laudamus. The noyse whereof fylled the ayer vp to the sterres, and all the reste folowed them, crying: whow victoria, victoria, victoria. And euen at the very same instante range all the belles in Rome. The pope himselfe was by and by caught with mennes handes, and borne vpon theyr shoulders, and so they caried home the moste holy father to hys place with a great pompe and triumphe. Nowe must ye not mernayle though ye sawe me, as ye sayed in the begynninge iocunde and merye.

Mas. Alas what became of the poore imbassadors?
Lepi. They were all stryken in a dumpe by and by: and departed to theyr innes sad & heuy, taking thys great rebuke so well as it might be.
Mas. Yf I had bene in theyr cotes, I woulde not haue thought, that it had bene good taryinge for me then in Rome.
Lepi. I thinke no manne woulde vse any violence agaynste them.
Mas. Wo well, I am suer the pope would no more send them wine of Grecia, and Corsica.
Lepi. Or if he sent any, it shoulde peradventure bee myngeled. But nowe canne I tary no longer with you for now I see the nyght drauethe on, and I haue an exceedinge deale of busines to doe. Thinke ye not, where this disputacion was, euen where there was none els by, sauing the popes moste faythefull frendes, who woulde say nothinge but that should make for the pope.
Mas. Yf it be, as you say, either wil they hold theyr peace, or elles they haue very litle to saye to theyr commendacion.
Lepidus. Ye bee in a manifest errour. For there was neuer so greate a lye, but it may be so craftely coloured, and painted, that the blynd common people may thinke it very trewe. I haue nowe tolde you all the whole matter, desiringe you to kepe it secret as ye promessed me at the beginninge.
Mas. I will doe the beste I can, but me thinketh it will be very hard for me so to doe. I thanke you hartely for your paynes for shewinge this prety story so fully, and so diligently.

Lucifer. Beelzebub.

I

I haue thought good to call you agayne to gether here in thys place, that I might reioyce with you for the byrthe of Antichriſt, ſo happy, & ſo vnloked for: euen as the angelles reioyſed in Chriſtes natiuitie. But nowe muſt we laye our heades to gether, and take counſell by what meanes, and deuiſe wee maye eſtabliſhe thys our kyngdom, and increaſe it, & bring it to the higheſt degre of all wickednes, and miſchiefe. Me thynketh it were beſt firſt to goe about ſo to ſette forth and amplifie hys honor, that menne by litle and lytle maye take thys Antichriſte for a certayne God in earthe, and honor and magnifie hym euen as their god. That we maye vſe the highe authoritie, whiche he hath, for a handſome and ſtrong inſtrument to the committinge of all kyndes of deceyptes, miſcheſes, and wickednes. We wyll pryntе in mennes heartes (as muche as in vs lyeth) that Chriſte gaue the keyes of the kingdom of heauē to Peter, and his ſucceſſors and alſo ful power, and iuriſdiction, not onely of the empire of thys worlde, but alſo of the heauenly kingdome.

Beelze. Truely thys thynge pleaſeth vs very well, ſo that he haue none authoritie in hell ouer vs, for we be ſurely perſuaded, that he will come to ſo highe a degre in abhominacion, and wickednes, that yf he ſhoulde haue the rule ouer vs, but one day, he would bryng vs into a greate deale worſe caſe then we be.

Luci. Yt is euen as thou ſayeſt. But we wyll foreſee to ỹ ieoperdy wiſely ynough, for my truſt is to bring him to ſuch a wickednes that he ſhal aduenture with hys theuiſh fingers to corrupt the holy ſcriptures, & ſhal violently & miſchieuouſly wryth them to the eſta-

blishinge, increasing, and exercisyng, of his intolle-
rable tiranny. I knowe well they will not be ashamed
to saye, when Christe sayed to Peter, thou shalt
be called Cephas, that he mente thou shalt bee called
head, and so was Peter made head of all thapostles,
who willinglye obeyed that primacie. And also that
Peter afterwarde left this chiefe high authoritie to
the Bychoppes of Rome by succession.

Beelze. Yf the matter woulde come thus to passe, in
case Peter shoulde be rayled agayne from deathe he
shoulde no more be Pope, no, he shoulde haue no ma-
ner of authoritte.

Luci. In dede he shoulde haue no more then shoulde
please our Bychoppe of Rome to graunte hym of hys
bountifull liberalitie. And this thynge is very nota-
ble, we will cause all their lyes to be written in their
canons, and so will we blinde the eyes of the vnlear-
ned, that they shall take the same canons for thynges
moste holye. And also we shall all cause the churche of
Rome, notwithstandynge it is most wicked and here-
ticall, that it shall not onely be accounted for the chur-
che of Christ, but also it shall be take for the head and
mother of all other churches.

Beelze. Surely the churches of Christ wyll neuer so
take it, thoughe oure churches so doe.

Luci. Yes, menne shall haue this opinion of the chur-
che of Rome chiefelye, and so of all other churches
that shal hang vpō her, ỹ they be ỹ churches of Christ
thoughe they be ours neuer so muche. We wyll per-
suade also that the churche of Rome is without spot,
and worthye to be as a glasse and ensample to all o-
ther churches.

Beelze. Yea of all abhominacion.

Luci.

 All shall folowe after her as after a chiefe ladye mayster that can not doe amisse, who hath full power: vnto whom all may appele, and from whom none maye appeale, vnto whome men must rune for refuge in matters of weight, as it were to god, because she maye be iudge to all other, and be iudged of none other, and maye call agayne her sentences as oft as her listeth, & chaunge statutes made in counselles, and pronounce hym an heretike, whiche darreth speake one word against it whose seat, dignitie, & authoritie is hyghest, by the whiche authoritie she may gather general counselles together, & by whom all doctrines shalbe alowed or disalowed: who onely may determine & stablishe controuersies in religiō of what matter so euer they began. Who only maye expounde the olde canons and the holy scriptures as it pleaseth her. And that all menne maye honour and obeye her, thoughe the thynge she commaunde seme neuer so wrongefull and intollerable. Nowe if the churche of Rome haue once so large authoritie, and yet be vnder the pope, euen as the wife is in the subiection of her husband: consider then with youre selues how greate authoritie our high bishop of Rome shall haue. For besides all these thynges rehersed, he may bringe to passe that the sentence whiche he hath once geuen and alowed for good maye be vayne and of none effecte: he onely shall haue authoritie to establish new religions, & al such ordinaunces as he shal make, must be receaued with no lesse reuerence then though they had bin spoken with gods own mouth. Because that his goodnes shalbee the helthe of men, and may haue none other iudge but god alone, and that it is not necessary that he should pourge himselfe

of his fault when he is accused by other: because Peter hath left to all bysshops of rome by continuall succession not onely al his merites, but also his innocentie, and because he hathe authoritie ouer iustice: and also because hys power is of god, & themperours of the pope, and hath authoritie ful, and whole in earth to apoynt and determine what him listeth in all controuersies, that come in question in matters of religion, for he hathe the solutions of all controuersyes hid within hys breste, and he is the heyer of all thempier, and of the kingdome of the Romanes, and therfore may he doe what he will, for he hathe as muche authorytie as euer had Peter.

Beelze. This onely thing, excepted, that he can not rayse deade men to life againe, as Peter once dyd.

Luci. He only hathe thauthoritie to canonize Sainctes, he only is aboue al counselles, & ordinances, he only may dispence agaynst iustice, & he only may change gods definitiue sentence. And if it were so that al the whole world should speake against the pope, yet must y minde of the pope onely bee alowed. He only hath y knowledge of the church, and that after such a sorte, that he only cã chaunge the nature of thinges, & make somwhat of nothing. In him only must the will onely be esteemed for the best reason, that can be deuised, not so hardy that any man should say vnto him, why doe you this, or this thing after this or that fashiõ. For he can make rightuousnes of wrong, & amend all thynges as he shal thinke good, he cã expound, & chaunge lawes, & make al square thinges rounde, as one that is neither pure god, neyther pure manne.

Beelz. Then shall he be a deuell, or elles some kind of brute beast. But I thinke it no very harde thinge to

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perſwade all thys geare to hym, hys mynd is ſo wonderfully puffed vp with ambicion.

Yet can I not ſee howe menne maye be made beleue, that the Pope is their God in earth.

Luci. Yea, ye knowe not that it is an eaſie thynge to deceyue the common ſort of the vnlearned, namely in maters of religiõ. You knowe right wel ẏ they be naturally enclining to al kindes of ſuperſticiõ. There is none ſo shamefull a lye, nor no decrypt ſo farre out of frame, that the worlde wyll not readely receyue, yf it be deliuered them by anye authoritie with ſome colour, and lykelihod of a trueth. What chriſtian man is he, whiche wyll not wyllyngly beleue, that Chriſt, is aſcended vp into heauen, and hathe left hys Vicar here in earth indwed, and furniſhed with a ful power and authoritie to doe all maner of thynges. At the leaſt wyſe that faultes myghte be amended, whiche amongeſt a numbre of matters, readely ariſe in the churche by the reaſon of hys abſence. And that eſpecially, when the worlde hathe conceaued a wonderfull good opinion of their lyfe and learnynge, whiche ſhal be the letters forthe of the matter. And more ouer we wyll accurſe hym, what ſo euer he be, and declare him an Apoſtata, a blaſphemer agaynſt the holy goſt, irregular, worthye to bee ſuſpended, and diſgraded, that wyll aduenture to ſpeake but one worde agaynſt our Popehod. And yf it fortune that he be a Bychoppe, or a prieſt that committe thys fault, we will haue hym declared excomunicate, deliuered into the power of Satan, an hereſyke, a defamed perſon, an infidell, a committer of Sacriledge, a Hiſmatike, a dampned and a curſed body. Who is, that wyll not be affrayed of theſe wordes, when the very ſounde of them be-

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being spoken is so fearefull. Yf these threteninges will not be sufficient, then in dede wyll we attempt moste cruel persecucions, men shalbe cast in prisō, & shal lose bothe life and goodes. There shalbee no fault in the worlde more heynously punished then thys one of disobedience agaynste our Popehod. Menne shall heare God blaspheme, and some deny the myght of God, and some mocke God: and yet shall all menne laughe & make a game therat as though it were but a trifelyng matter. But yf any manne shall attempte to denie the Popes power, or to deminish thesame neuer so lytle, he shall be burned alyue with longe torimente. Moze ouer we wyll cause all the bokes to be burned as manye as shall seme to make any thinge agaynste our pophod. Yea, and we will forbid men that they shall not haue the holy scripture in their handes nor in their sight vnder the payne of fyer and rope.

Beelze. This thinge woulde they doe very gladly because the scriptures be against them. But it wold be so manifest and open sacriledge and wickednes, that it can not well be cloked with no color, pretence, fraude or craft. Truly it shalbe enough to corrupt the scriptures, and violently to writhe it to their croked purpose without al feare or shame.

Luci. They shall not alow nor suffer any bookes to be red but such as maynteyne this craft & falshod. So that euen as the simple shepe, folow their shepheardе: so shall the Christen men their heades, & we will so indeuor our selues to blynde menne, that they shall not onely beleue and magnifie thys hyghe byshop for their priuat commoditie: but they shall also defende it tothe and nayle euen to the very deathe.

Beelze. But howe maye it be brought to passe, that they

they shall not see so manifest a lye, they being the heades of the churche.

Luci. We will iuggle their eyes with proudtytles, highe dignities, offices, & benefices, the reuenewes of whom shalbe fat stipendes, that they maye make gaudes & triūphe wt all aboūdaūce of pleasure. We wil also make lawes yt the people shall not only reuerence them, but shal also esteme them as goddes for theyr religions and popish holynes. And againe yt men shal alway studie, & occupie alle wittes in theyr heads to preserue & increase this dignitie, whereunto there may apeare some hope yt they shall atteyne: all shall hange vpon the popes sleue, not for feare only of losse of theyr office, benefices, yerlie reuenewes, & promotions: but also vpon hope to get more. Now maye you easely iudge whether they will apply the powers of their strength & wit, or not, for yt settinge forthe & establyshing of our pope hod, & the earnester they will be in this poynte, the more necessary & profytable a thinge it wilbe to them to defend the same. For if the popeshippe once fall, they should all sterue for hūger, because they haue none honest craft, or exercise to take them to. Yea and I will cause, the pope to forbid them al honest kindes of exercises, and that vnder a couler of religiō & holines, lest peraduēture yt handes & consciences of spirituall mē should be fouled with labozinge, they shall all bee occupied (suche shalbe the bosting about yt helth of soules. So great shall they be that they shall disdayne to preache gods worde: neither shall they be otherwise occupied, then in celebrating, againe, & agayne their colde and superstitiouse ceremonies, and that with such a pompe and glory, that it shall be a shewinge and a settinge

fourthe of themselues.

Beelze. In what kynde of exercise then shall they occupie themselues all theyr life tyme, for it is a very paynefull thinge to be allwayes ydell.

Luci. They shall not bee alwayes ydell good syr, but shal haue somethinge adoe alwayes, in dysynge, cardinge, banketinge, in wantonnes, contencion, and other such lyke courtly pastymes. And that they may be more diligent in the mayntenynge of thys popeshipe, I will prouyde for them vnder a pretence of an ecclesiasticall lawe, ỹ they shalbe disburdened, and fre from all exactions of princes of thys worlde. Moreouer I will make a lawe whereunto shalbe sworne all bysshoppes, and Doctors, that they shall not onely attempt no thing agaynst this popehod, but also shal maynteyne, and defende it to the vttermoste of theyr power. And also for the stablishement of oure Antichriste, it shall be stablysshed by a law, that these wicked wretches, moued thereunto by oure spirite, shall sometyme congregate them selues together in theyr wicked counselles onelye to kepe downe, and extinguish (by a common consent) the treuth of the gospel. By meanes of the which congregacion they shall retayne all the princes and magistrates of the earthe to confirme theyr tyrannye, and to defende thys detestable abhominacion of the Pope. And we will make the worlde beleue that suche counselles canne not erre, whiche thinge wilbe easy to compase: men shalbe so blynd and ignorant. We will also deuise for the popes pleasure a newe kinde of diuinitie altogether vaine, superstitious, boide of learning, heretical & wicked, ful of vanities and darknes, of mans inuẽtions, doubtes, questions, & contencions, the mother

of

of all sectes, errours and, abhominations.

Thys euill kynde of diuinitie shall bryngе in suche a darkenes, that it shall hurte and deceyue beryе good wittes. There shall bee no scole, neither vniuersitie, whiche shall not be hurted and infected with this Antichrist of ours. Good letters shall be banyshed, and so shall they lacke all good learnynge, in so much that their children (though they be baptised, and therfore dedicated to God) they shall learne nothinge els in their scoles but vayne and fylthye tales. And furthermore that the tiranny of thys Bishoppes empire may be the more stronglye, and surely established, the Popes beinge inspired with oure spirite shall wryte decrees, and decretalles, that is to saye: prophane, wicked and abhominable sentences. And yet not withstanding, the worlde shalbe in suche a blindenes, that they shall thynke them very holy decrees. And to conclude in fewe wordes, thoughe God onely bee to bee worshypped, and prayed vnto with a trewe louynge intiernes of myndes: yet by my craftes wyll I bryng it to passe, that the Pope shall commaunde meine to praye not onely to Angels, and Saynctes, and to such as were most wicked, and yet by hym canonized: but also vnto their Images, pictures, and reliques, and that with as stinking a kinde of superstitiō as may be.

Beeze. Verely I can not perceyue howe euer it wil come to passe, that christian menne maye fall into so manifest vices, wickednesses, and ydolatry. Of a truethe, if there woulde come suche a tyme, wherin these detestable vices myghte bee committed, that ye haue now spokē of: I thinke the christian men would haue moe ydoles, then euer had either the Jewes, or the gentiles, and woulde exceede with their wickednes

and ydolatry all other nacions of the worlde.

Luci. But I promise you that we may easely bringe it to passe by the meanes of thys oure head, that men shal fall both into these, & al other kyndes of abhominacions. Yf ye doubt how this thing may be brought to passe I wyll tell you, that ye maye helpe to sette it forwarde to the vttermost of your powers. It is not vnknowē vnto you, ꝑ they haue a custome in ꝑ church of Christ, when any christian man suffereth martyrdome: the rest of the Christian congregacion doethe what they cā to haue their bodies honorably buried, as it is a thynge bothe honest and godlye. And their Bishoppes yerely vpon thesame daye, that those martirs suffered be wont to make mencion of their constancie and victorie: to thintent that menne shoulde be incouraged, not onely to folowe the example of the Saynctes that they maye bee stronge to dye for the glorie of Christ, yf the thyng so require: but also for a witnes of the resurreccion, that is to come, & to bring menne in a contempt of thys lyfe, whiche shortly wyll faade, and perishe, into the hope of lyfe euerlastynge. Whiche deuocion God hath sundrye tymes approued, and confirmed with sundry miracles. Now wil we moue and stirre menne vnder a pretence of religion, and holines to rip and cutte vp theyr dead bodies, & to put their bones in vesselles of Christall, siluer, or golde, & to set thē vpō aulters, where the lordes supper is acustomed to be ministred, as in a place moste holy, and replenysshed with all godlye religion. In the meane space the people shall flocke thither together, and shall beginne not onely to pray to the Saynctes, but also to theyr bones and reliques. Whiche ydolatry we wyll confirme with some miracle of ours: by

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thesame power, that god hath permitted vnto vs, as he promised in holye scriptures. Of thys shall arise suche superstition amongest menne, and suche a vnaduised zeale of religion: that by & by they shal begyn to buylde temples, chapelles, & aulters, which shal be halowed in the honor of these Sainctes, & there shall the Images of them be sette forthe to be sene of the people. Yea and yerelye shall their feastes bee kepte, that euen as a greate number of the Iewes ranne to Bethania, not for Iesus sake onely, but to see Lazarus when they heard tell that he was reysed agayne by Christe from deathe: So shall the Christian menne runne to the churches rather for to see and worshippe those Images, and reliques of saynctes, then for Christe. Neither is it to be douted, but that a tyme wyll come, when they shall set more store in very dede by saynctes, then by god, although they will peraduenture be afrayed to say so. And also we muste handle the pope wisely, whome they shal take for theyr god, that he may not only allowe these mischieues, and abhominacions: but that he may of himselfe will them, and commaunde them. Thys thinge will he doe not onely for the gayne and priuat commoditie that shall aryse therof, when he shall see people rũne to deade mens bodies, to Images of Saictes, to altars, and pictures, and offer there, muche money, buyld gorgeouse and sumptuouse chappels, and churches, and giue vnto them great yerely reuenewes, whereby his kingdome shalbe increased, but also for thopiniõ of religion and holines that he may shewe himselfe as a god inearthe, and hable dayly to fynde out new religions and fashions, that were neuer sene before, neither knowen to men, that be aliue, neither to the old holy fathers, neither yet to Christe Iohn.xi.

hym selfe. Then, as tiraunte bee accustomed to doe, when they will reigne, whiche make common games, and triumphes, and goodly shewes, where with to occupy mens myndes, that the people gasing vpon the sightes present shal haue no leasure to fansy howe to auoide the tyranne, or to consider howe to discharge theyr shoulders from the burden of bondage: so shall the pope of a lyke sort iudge it mete to deuyse dayly new rules, new religions, new kyndes of seruinge god, new trades of lyuinge, and new ceremonies. Thus shall he doe, that menne beinge taken, and astonied with merueylinge at these newes, and faste tyed with the rope of superstició, and blinded with the inchantment of erroz: shall haue neither leasure, neither meane to open their eyes, whereby to espie out the popes abhominable wickednes.

Beelze. All this geare pleaseth vs very wel, one thing only excepted.

Luci. What is that one thinge, whiche pleaseth you not?

Beelze Not withstanding that there can no greater abhominació be committed, then that ye haue rehersed, yet wil he now be much worse thē we. Wherfoze I feare me lest, when he shall dye & come down hether to hell, that as he passeth vs in wickednes so he wilbe aboue vs in dignitie.

Luci. Knowe ye not that as Christe foz his humblenes was auaunced aboue al the companies of angels: so also must Antichzistе foz hys pryd be auaunced aboue al the ozders of deuels? we muste take this seruice wel a wozthe. And as foz my parte, suerly I would not stycke to lease my chiefe rule in hel, of condition I might wreke my malice vpon god. Thinke

ye

ye that he will desiere to bee any thinge els ouer vs then oure heade, as he is in the worlde the heade of oure members.

But I pray you suffer me to make an end of my matter. Ye know ryght wel that the chosen of God be saued by the mere mercy, and goodnes of God through Christ, who is dead for them vpon the crosse. Yea and that the good thinges, which either they haue nowe, or had in tymes paste, or here after shall haue, all came of the pure grace, and tender mercy of God by the deathe of Christe, whiles they beleue in hearte and mynde, and assuredly feale in the spirite that all these thynges bee geuen them of God freely: In the whiche thinges consisteth the true christian religion. But I by the meanes of oure head, will prayse and magnifie by lytle and lytle the lyghte of nature, as muche as may be, and that manhath of hymselfe, his witte, hys wisdome, hys power, his free will: and in the meane space will I minishe the lawe of God, I will bury Christ, and shadow the grace of God with darkenes so wittely, and so warely, that men shall beleue that they be able, as they shall dreame) to fulfyll the whole lawe of God by a certayne influence of his grace graunted to all menne. And more ouer to doe certayne other workes of muche more perfection then those workes, whiche Christe commaunded, whiche workes they shall call workes of supererogation. By the meanes of these workes shall be established sundrye newe fashions of liuinge, and newe rules shall arise, which shalbe allowed by oure chiefe byshoppe, though they be playne contrary to the law of God, to Christ, to the grace of God, and to the gospell. And the professors of these rules, studying vnder a pretēce

and

and shadowe of great holines, and perfectnes of relí-
gion to amplifie the dignitie of the chiefe Bysshoppe,
and commending it aboue the mone, as blynd leaders
of the blynde, shall firste deceyue them selues, and af-
terwarde almost the whole vniuersalll worlde. These
newe monstrous creatures shall preache: these shalbe
beleued, when they shall crye that the lawe of God is
imperfect, and that their fathers haue fulfylled that,
whiche was of God omitted, and haue ioyned many
perfections to the lawe of God, not disclosed to the
worlde as yet neither by the Prophetes, neither by
Christe, neither by the Apostles, without the keping
of the whiche thynges menne canne not be perfecte.
Furthermoze they shal affirme and contend that men
shal receaue the grace of God by thys most holye and
stronge thyng called frewyl, and that they maye by
the helpe therof kepe the lawe of god and fulfil his
cõmaũdemẽtes full & whole. And besides these woz-
kes, which god hathe commaunded, that they be ha-
ble to do other wozkes of moze perfection. And they
shall hold ỹ men maye make recompense sufficient to
the goodnes of god, foz al ỹ giftes, which either they
haue receaued oz shal receyue at hys hand, how much
so euer it be that they haue receyued. And that they
can satisfie foz all the synnes whiche euer they haue
oz shall committe and foz what thynge els so euer it
be, that they be bound to God foz. And that they may
of thẽselues deserue all maner of goodes bodely oz
goostlye, whiche either they haue, oz shall receyue of
god. So that they shal imagine them selues hable to
deserue so much glozy, that god is not hable to repay
and rewarde the thynge that he oweth vnto them.
And therfoze shall they sell their merites to other mẽ

as

as thoughe they had superfluous, and to manye. And because they can neuer sell, or giue so many but that they shal alwayes haue a number remayninge, they shal make oure holy father the pope the inheritour of theyr merites, that he maye accomplyshe all thinges for all men requisit. And this riche treasorer of merites he shall sell wonderfull dearely in his Jubilies and pardones, & so fonde an opinion shall they haue, that they shal thinke thē selues hable to deserue gods free electiō and shal thinke gods heuenly prouidence, and all thinges that belonge to saluacion to hange vpon theyr fre will, and vpon theyr pope.

Beelze. Yf it be so as ye say, then is free wil a greate Lorde, & shalbe a boue god him selfe. For as I perceaue he shall either chose or refuse, healthe or condempnacion like a lord, and god as his seruaunt shal minister occasions and tyme conuenient vnto him, so shall the will of god be lyke a bonde woman, and the will of man like vnto a Quene, it shalbe necessary not that manne shall applye hys will to gods wyll: but that god shal applye hys will to mans wyl. Neither canne god chose men without the popes license. So that, incase god had neuer so reproued, and reiected any manne: and the pope (in whose hande all power is) mindeth to saue thesame manne, gods determinacion shalbe voyde. And so shal the pope be greater thē Chriſte, and mannes fre wil also, because the whole saluacion of al man kynde shalbe in theyr owne power. But Chriſte aunswering the children of Zebedee, of whome the one desired to syt on the right hand of Chriſte, and the other on the left, sayed: it was not in him to geue that thinge, because all hong vpon gods free election, and Chriſte also sayed not trewe when

he so saied, for he shoulde haue graunted that al de-
pended vpon the pope, and mans free wil.

Luci. Yf he were not suche a one he shoulde not be Antichriste. And because the election of god dothe abase a man, & casteth hym down more thē any thing els, whiche thinge manne beinge naturally inclyned to esteme highely himselfe can not abyde, therefore shal it be an easy thynge to perswade to menne, that al the whole matter hangeth vpon hys owne fre wil, and not vpon god. Therefore wil the pope neuer forsake thys office, to promote and further this our purpose by al the meanes that he canne, and that for many other causes, but chiefly for that mannes merites shall be as it were a grounde worke of all hys marchandise and vauntage. Howe beit that he maye the better sell and vtter thē, he shal mingle some merites of Christ amongest them, and shall boast that he hath the key of al these treasures, and ful authoritie to distribute, to apply, to sel, and to giue al at hys will and pleasure. And also a tyme there shall come, when the worlde shal beleue (because they shal thynke hym a god in earthe indued with moste greate authoritie) that he can bothe bynd and loose, saue, or condempne when it shalbe hys pleasure. Howe maye ye easelye perceaue whether menne wyl runne to hym or not, to bye heuen and paradise of hym. Oh howe many and howe abhominable fantasyes shall menne committe, when they shal saye to them selues: what care I of thys am I suer that I canne be absolued for money. What a number of soules shalbee damned, thinking to be saued by theyr own merites, by the popes pardones, and absolutions, because they shalbe without faythe and without Christe. Out of thys deuelyshe foun-

foũtaine shal sprig, Jubilies, statiõs, pardõs, absolu-
ciõs, dispensaciõs, relaxations, & an infinit number of
monstors, whiche dayly they shal deuise to sel Christ,
and hys merites, and heuen and paradise with all.
Furthermore we will cause that this oure mische-
uouse paricidẽ shal by his fraude and craft perswade
Christian menne, that Christe with al hys merites,
passion, death, and benefites be not sufficient to saue,
(I will not saye the reproued and reiected sorte) but
euen the very chosen of god, be it that they beleue in
Christe with neuer so lyuely a faythe. For they muste
moreouer of necessitie confesse all theyr synnes bothe
open & priuate, euen the verye inward thoughtes
and desiers, yea & all the braũches and circumstan-
ces of them, and disclose al thinge whether they be to
be spoken or not to a priest of hym apoynted.

Beelze. This thinge is not possible to bee done for
theyr synnes be innumerable.

Luci. Suerly oure priestes can not deuise a bet-
ter waye to holde mens consciences in a perplexitie,
doutefull, and vncerteyne. And so when men shal bee
in a continual doutinge, whether they be in the fauor
of god or not: they shal runne oft to oure prieste, and
his gayne shall alwayes increase, in that he shal re-
ceaue wel for his absolutions.

Beelze. Yf there shoulde suche a tyme come, when
I myght see Christan men disclosing theyr secretes
euen suche, as be of greatiste weight, and that slaun-
deringe them selues contrary bothe to the lawe of
god, and the lawe of nature, and oftentymes also
with no smal offence of their neighbour: to a wicked
thiefe: & shoulde also suffer their wiues, their dough-
ters, & sisters to opẽ ẏ botome of their hartes & mat-
ters of no honesty, not alway to a gelded mã but most

cõmonly to a vicious verlet. I would be bold to saye, they were the most soles in the vniuersall worlde. But tell me in good sayth, what profit shoulde insewe of this deuelishe folishenes, yf it shoulde bee brought in to our churche.

Beelze. Oh it should muche increase and amplyfie the honour of our byshop, and hys members, and bee a very greate gayne, and profit to hys churche. For then should men beleue that he by hys ministers did pardone synnes and not god, and that the same syns were not forgeuen by the vertewe of the passion of Christ: but by the vertew of the absolution that they herd the priest speake. And in confession, mentiõ shalbe made of all thinges sauyng of Christ, and so shall we bury Christ together with his passion and death, & god with his grace. And more ouer what a greate commoditie shall it bee to the pope trowe you, when his ministers by thys means shall knowe all the secrets of princes, I passe ouer how that in hearing of women secretly disclose theyr dishonestie, with al the circumstaunces thereof, and all vnhonest thoughtes and desieres: suche confessours being inflamed with the communicacion, and consideringe craftely howe theyr myndes bee inclined: will beginne many fayer and handsom snares, (which they may eafely make) whereby to holde them, euen as it were by the heere of the head, when they are once made pryuye to their secretes. And ye may furthermore gesse that priestes will not geue theyr labour in absoluing for god haue mercy: but will rather sell it for no small some of money. And they shal also require them to doe the penaunce that they haue inioyned them. Whiche thing shal make muche for theyr commoditie, and also pro-

fyt

fyt not a lytle to theyr holy churche of Rome.
And thys thynge also shalbe with out doubt, that the Pope beinge desirefull of parte of the gayne shall reserue many matters, and offences, from the whiche no manne maye be absolued but at Rome of the Pope hymselfe, or els of his confessours appoynted there, so that money must walke largely.

Beelze. There be also many sely olde wyues, whiche haue breathes that sauour not al the best, I mervaile howe the confessours shall tary to heare the rekening of all their faultes

Lucic. They shall dispatche suche quickely with two or three wordes, with out tariaunce in searchynge out the bowelles and botome of euery vice, as they shall doe with the yonger women.

Belze. And howe I praye you may we bryng it to passe, that thys confession maye bee vsed amongest menne?

Luci. Ye knowe well that christian menne, whiche be troubled in conscience, be strayght wont to runne to some learned manne for counsell, howe they maye haue liuely faythe, and be increased and established in thesame, howe they maye take hede to themselues from sinne and be perfect, whome the sayed learned menne absolue, that is, they shewe them by goddes worde, that they be absolued, yf they beleue in Christ: and so he geueth them counsell, and sheweth them the light of trueth. Ye knowe also that suche, as bee excommunicated be wonte after repentaunce to come to the priest, and shewe hym that they be sory for their offences, who perceyuinge that it is true, absolueth them, and doth notifie to the whole congregacion, that they be absolued and amēded, by the meanes wherof they shalbe receyued of al men as brethren. Then doe they

inioyne them penaunce for their publyke offences, whiche they haue committed, not that they canne satisfie in the syghte of God by that penaunce, before whose throne Christ hath made sufficient satisfactiõ, but to be an example to other, ꝑ neither they, nor anye other committe the lyke any more. These wilbe good and handsome beginninges, whereby to bryng in by lytle and lytle oure confession. For we wyll persuade menne, that the prieste muste knowe their consciences, that they maye be absolued of their sinnes. And then wyll they tell all theyr offences both open and secret, yea and they will beleue that they be absolued not by Christ, but per opus operatum (that is) by the worke that is wrought of confessing, that is to say: for the remembryng of their sinnes, for the shame, wherwith they be touched in tellynge their synnes, for the contrition, for the absolucion of the prieste, for ꝑ penance to thẽ inioyned, & for the Popes pardons. Neither nede you to doubt, whether the Bysshoppe will bee content with this confession, for he wyll gladly commaunde it to all christian men. and ꝑ it maye be the more esteemed, he shal boast and lye that he receiued it of Christ, with suche a commendacion that he ought to be burned, whiche denyeth it to be of the lawe of God. But thys thynge I would haue not vnknowen vnto you, that suche menne as be oppressed with tiranny they be deliuered by death from all boundage and seruitude, yf they be not deliuered before. But as for the poore christians, though they dye, yet canne they not by any meanes auoyde the tiranny of our Pope, for at that tyme especially they be snared, that is to saye, in the houre of deathe, and bee taken prisoners in a place (where or what it is I can not tel) named purgatory.

This

This purgatorye shalbee buylded by oure Pope full of flame & fire, whereof he onely shall haue the keyes out of whiche place no man can gette out onelcs the Pope lycence hym, and yet paying a sume of money, whereof shall so much gayne arise, that the profyt of that only shalbe more vnto hym then of al the reste of his promotions & benefices. Beelze. And who is that shal come in to this purgatory of theyrs-they, which dye in faithe, or out of faythe? Luci. They that dye in faythe, for all the other be ours without purgatorye. Beelze. Then is not god with his grace enough for such, neither Christ with hys lyfe, passion, and death, neither the helpe of so many sainctes, neither his own merites, nor confessiō, nor contricion, nor satisfactiō, nor absolution, nor all the penaunce in the worlde, neither Jubilies neither yet pardons. Luci. In thys our confused kingdome of Babilon all thinges must be doutful and vncerteine. Beelze. What-our faith in Christ also? Luci. That shalbe altogether doutful, for this shal they take as a chiefe article of theyr faythe, that euery manne ought to dout of hym self whether they be chosē or not-whether god hate thē or fauour them-whether Christe died for them or not-yea and though he died for thē neuer so, yet whether he satisfyed for theyr sinnes or not-Beelze. And how can they establyshe thys purgatory of theyrs? Luci Our word shalbe theyr grounde. Beelze. Howe?

Luci. I wil shewe you, when you shall obsesse any man, and theyr priestes and fryars come with theyr conjuringes to conjure you, ye shall saye that ye be the soule of some of theyr acquayntance, whiche died longe agone, and remayne to this daye in a place

ful

full of flames and fyer that they cal purgatory, wher you must remayne vntil theyr synnes be cleane pourged, and that ye shal sone bee deliuered if they wyll procure a certayne number of masses to bee sayed for you, & yf they once promise you to doe so, then ye wyll for a testimonie of the matter trouble no more the partie so obsessed, whiche thyng ye shall perfourme, yf it be promised. Then when menne shall perceyue it to be a matter in good earnest, they shall thynke, it to be so in dede. And prieستes, and monckes shall fauour muche the matter for the great gaynes, that they shal haue therby. Yea, and they shall so fauoure it, that in continuaunce of tyme it shalbe made an article of the faythe, though it be a thynge most wicked. And they shalbe rewarded with fagot and fyre that wyll aduenture to speake one worde agaynst it. And also they shall persuade the vnlearned that thys fonde flameles fyre of purgatorye maye bee proued by the holy scriptures. And here lykewise shall the Popes authoritie bee required, that it maye bee streatched out to purgatory.

Beelze. Me thought I herde you speake of masses, what thynges they be I can not tell. Wherefore my desire is to knowe what kyndes of creatures these masses bee.

Luci. Truely of other thynges, ỹ belonge to ỹ Popes dominion, the masse is both most holy, and most pestilent. In the outwarde shewe, and shyninge, and beutie it shalbe most holy: but yet in dede most pestilent. Ye know right wel that the Lordes supper was instituted of Christ in the remembraunce of hys passion, & being destributed, as it shoulde be in loue and apostolicall simplicitie was a thynge, and is to thys

daye

day, that hath brought muche comfort, and consolacion to the chosen of God. But nowe our holye father shall not onelye chaūge the substances of it, but also chaunge the accidentes of it in the masse. So that the supper of the Lorde shall no more bee the supper of the Lorde, neyther in substaunce, neither in fashion, neither in lykelyhod, neither in shewe: but it shal bee all together contrarye and enemy to it selfe, and full of wickednes and superstition. For wheras the Lordes supper was first ordayned of Christ to cal agayne the passion of Christ to the remembraūce of the faithfull: they, to blot out that excedyng greate benefit of Christe, shall boast that they offer Christe agayne to his father in their masses, not for the quicke onely, but also for the dead: as thoughe they shoulde saye. Whē Christ offered hymselfe once vpon the crosse to his father, he made not satisfaction sufficiently enough for the synnes of all man kynde, wherefore we offer hym agayne d a yly, & nayle him agayne vpō the crosse, desiring the sainctes to helpe hym, to make his oblacion perfect. And where as Christ in the institucion of hys supper appoynted bread and wyne, whose example hys ministers shoulde folowe, teachyng what thing it is, and to what ende, as Christ dyd, and exhortyng other that they shoulde lift vp their myndes into heauen being stirred by thys heauenly Sacrament, that they shoulde haue their eye set vpon Christ onely, and so by faythe to vse hym for a heauenly foode of their soules: they to auaunce their dignitie and authoritie, and to cause themselues to bee accoūted goddes in yearth, shal persuade menne falsly, that libertie to minister that Sacramēt is onely graunted to the anoynted, shauē, & oyled priestes of ꝑ pope, that ꝑ supper of the Lord shalbe translated by that heade of abhominacion the Pope, in to the masse. And they shall boast

ẏ these fat masse mongers with pronoũcing certeyne wordes, (what they be I can not tell) as it wer in an inchauntment haue not only by & by cõsecrated, but also transformed & transubstantiated ẏ breade into ẏ body & ẏ wine into ẏ blude of Christ. This wil they doe not only to increase theyr estimacion, but also ẏ men beinge deceaued by eatyng that host, although they bee without faythe, shall thinke they possesse Christ clothes, heer & al. Yea they shal bring men into the belefe, that by the only hearynge of one of these masses, or seyinge the hoste lyfted vp, moste plentiful grace and pardone (as they call it) shalbee graunted. And lyke erraunt theues, they shall robbe the laytie of the cuppe, that is to say of the one halfe of the supper, agaynst the expresse word of god, to declare that they be more worthye menne and in higher authoritie, and that there is a greate difference betwene the commen people and the popes anoynted. They onely shalbe fed in theyr priuat masses, whome they shal not be ashamed to sell for money. And they shal kepe the breade so by them consecrate in a boxe as it were in a prisõ, & that shal they set forth to the people to be worshipped as a god. And they shall not only cary it about in theyr pompes and open shewes: but it shall goe before the pope as though it were hys foote mã. To be short: Though the lordes supper be a thinge moste holy, yet being chaunged into the masse it shall be a thing most pestilẽt. Moreouer the supper, which was ordeyned of Christe to be vnto all Christian mẽ as a pledge of his promes, peace, & concorde: the same being once abused shalbee thoriginal & well sprynge of al discorde, dissencion, contenciõ, heresies, & sectes, for the diuerse and sundrye opinions that men shall

haue

haue of thesame Sacramente. We will also make a lawe that these prieſtes anoynted by the pope ſhall haue no wyues.

Beelze. Why I praye you?

Luci. That they maye apeare outwardly altogether heauenly, and celeſtiall lyke aungels, ſo that therefore menne ſhall meruayle more at them, and ſet the more ſtore by them. Yea and moreouer that the pope, & not theyr childrē may bee theyr inheritor. But chiefely that they maye be without the troubles, that chaunce in matrimonye and beinge at libertie vnder this coloure, maye committe al kyndes of fylthenes, that euer was done in all the worlde.

Beelze. Thinke you they wil condemne mariage?

Luci. They ſhall saye it is a wicked thinge. And thoughe it be agreable to nature, ordeyned of god, confirmed of Chriſte: yet ſhal they forbyd it to theyr nonnes, monckes and prieſtes, & to all theyr other creatures. Yea and at certeyne tymes they ſhall forbid it to all menne, and in certayne degrees, that they themſelues haue deuiſed, that by the meanes therof they may get a greate ſūme of money for diſpenſations. And at certayne tymes they ſhall forbid wholſome meate to be eaten, which god hath created to be vſed to his glory, and to bee taken with thankes geuinge. At certeyne times of the yere he ſhal not ſuffer them to eate but once in the daye. But all theſe thinges ſhal notwithſtandinge bee diſpenſed with al for money. He ſhal make of thys ſorte an infinit number of other preceptes, whiche he wyl say be neceſſary to ſaluacion. And ſo in making new articles of the faith he ſhal wander through al hereſies, which by mans iudgement and wiſdome haue a certeyne lykelyhode

to set forthe goddes glorye more worthelye. And to
comprehende thys large matter in fewe wordes: I
wil apply al the powers of my wytte, that thys crea-
ture of ours may doe muche more hurt to the soules
of menne, then Christe hymselfe dyd good. And it is
not to be douted, but that we wil make of this church
a very Babilon. Trewe it is, that a thing of
suche holynes can not be brought in a
moment sodaynly to the highest
degre of abhominacio, wher-
fore in this noble myschief
we must goe forwarde
by litle and litle, let-
tinge none occasi-
on slip, ẏ oportu-
nitie of
tyme shal offer vnto vs. Nowe ther-
fore shal you haue my lycence to
departe, requiringe you to
loose no tyme
Beelze. We wil doe your
commaundement.

(2)

Mychael. Gabriell. Christe.

CHRIST.

Myne angels, see you not howe a mortall manne in earthe, beinge moste vicious, and abhominacion it selfe, with no smal iniurye and contempte of god aduenturеth to settel himselfe in the holy place, and to boast himselfe to be my Vicar, and the vniuersall head of my churche. See you not howe vnder that pretence he hath crucified me agayne: and buried me agayne with all my greate benefites: my gospell, and my grace: See you not howe he hathe defiled, and infected the holy churche my welbeloued spouse, whome I my selfe haue redemed, washed and clensed, with myne owne proper blonde.

Mich. We see all together, and meruayle truely very much howe ye could suffer (now aboue foure hundreth yere) suche horrible abhominacions.

Christ. Althoughe the iudgementes of god be for the most parte hid from the knowledge of humayne creatures: yet must they be taken, as they be in dede, to be righteous and holy. For the wyll of God, as it is moste ryght, of necessitie, it is not onelye impossible that it shoulde erre in selfe, but also it is a rule of all other willes, and therefore muste euery creature take it for beste reason. And yet one cause canne I bringe whye god woulde suffer so muche euell to reigne so longe space.

Mich. We take the vnkyndnes of manne to haue deserued these great mischiefes, & that so it ought to be, ỹ god shuld suffer thē so to fall, as they haue fallē into so great euill, darkenes, heresies, and michiefes, bicause they loued not thee, as they ought, thou being the chiefe lyght, trueth, wisdom, lyfe, and ryghteousnes: neither wouldе they obey thy worde.

Christ. There be many causes, why god hathe so suffered thys longe space: But the chiefe is, that he wouldе make his glory more notable. And you know that durynge the reygne of thys Antichrist not one of the electes haue perished. Seinge they be in the handes of me, and my heauenly father none shall take thē from me, neither canne anye of them periche. And ye knowe also that thys wicked abhominacion with all hys malice, craftes, fraude, suttelties, errours, deceytes, prodicions, offences, euyl examples, michiefes, promises, flatterynges, rewardes, thretnynges, slanders, persecucions, tormentes, and deathes haue not hurte any whit in any one poynt the soule of any one of my chosē: But their malice hath rather made mine more glorious, in that their vertue hath ben tried, as golde in the fornace: and those, that be false christians by thys profe be declared to be hypocrites. And therfore, whether he wyll or not, I haue vsed hym as an instrument and a seruaunt for the larger setting forth of goddes glory. And more ouer, God wouldе haue all the deuilles of hell, and all euil menne, to abuse thys head of theirs to the distrucciō my of kyngdom, by deceate and violence, that I being moued by that occasion shoulde withstande ouercome, and destroye, thys head of abhominacion, and triumphe worthelye of hym, as ye shall shortly see, by the whiche victorye

I myght set forthe more clearely the power and wis-
dome of God. Marke therfore now and ye shall see,
how that in destroyeng of hym, ꝑ he may be destroy-
ed to more ignominie, I wyll not vse my power but
the bare worde of my ministers, wherby I wyll dis-
close these great mischiefes, and wyll lighten their
mindes with the knowledge of the truethe. I knowe
that menne wyll then open their eyes, and when they
shall perceyue that they haue bene so longe tyme bu-
ried in such darkenes of ignorannce, in that they haue
worshipped abhomination it selfe in stede of God:
they wyll humble themselues vnder the stronge
hande of God, and shall know what a miserable crea-
ture manne is and what he canne doe when he is de-
stitute of God, into howe many daungers he fallethe
headlonge, and howe necessary a thing the grace of
god is for hym. Nowe be all mischiefes and abhomi-
nacions come euen to the hiest state and degre, that
they canne come, the measure is full, their wickednes
exceedeth and is spread ouer all: therfore must I no
longer suffer. For as I haue promised, I muste and
wyll shorten these wofull dayes of malice for the loue
of my chosē. I must disclose thys wycked head of this
abhomination to hys confusion and goddes glorye.
For as I haue sayed before, there is nothyng hidden
but must be reueled. Ye shal see ꝑ when as I toke mā
hod vpon me, and appeared visible into the world al-
thoughe synne reygned stirred vp by the lawe, and
ruled all, with a great force and power, yet I in dy-
inge vpon the crosse had the victory and ouercame va-
liantly all the enemies of God: euen so nowe wyll I
triumphe of thys shameles and wycked head of ab-
minacion. Fyrst and formost I wyll destroye the tyrā-
nicall

Mat. xxiii. Math. 8

nicall dominion, whiche he hathe wrongfully vsed in the simple consciences of menne: and afterward will I take awaye from hym hys temporall power. And to hys further rebuke: Euen as the worlde hath taken him for a god in earthe thys long space: so wyll I nowe cause the worlde to acknowledge hym, to be the moste wicked tyrant, that euer was, or euer shalbe amongest menne. You myne angels, that bee appointed to the ministery of my chosen, ye shall doe your dewties diligently. And to the Gabriel: as thou
Dan.ix.e.x.c wast sente to Daniell to tell hym the tyme of the cõminge of Messias, and afterwarde also to zacharie, to signifie vnto hym the commyng of my fore runner
Luke.i. Iohn the Baptist, and laste of all to my mother to declare vnto her my concepcõ, so shalt thou now goe to Henry the eighte kinge of Englande, in whose heart thou shalt print, and perswade that all delayes set a parte he dryue thys cruell tyrant out of all his realmes and dominions.

Gabri. Forsouth we wyll gladlye (o lord) and with a swyftenes of spirit performe your cõmaundemẽt,

Christ. Ye shall vnderstande that Henry the eyghte shall deliuer hys dominions from the tiranny of thys mischieuous robber, and he shall not vtterly clense it from ydolatry & superstcion, whose rotes be further enteryd in to the heartes of menne, then that they can be pulled out agayne at the first plucke: For he shall not long lyue after thys valiant interprise attempted. But I wyll gyue hym a sonne named Edwarde the sixte, and because he shalbe one euen after myne owne heart, indwed with sundrye godly gifres, as one that shall loue me vnfaynedly, and shall perceyue howe manye and dyuerse wayes he is bounde to God, he

shal

shall not abide this great and rancke enemie of mine. Therefore folowynge hys fathers steppes he shall pourge all his kyngdomes, & dominiõs from all the superstitiõ & ydolatry of Antichzist. I wilbe alwayes with him, neither shall he want of my fauour, grace, and defence at any time, and he shall haue a chzistian Counsell whom I will vse as a mean, an instrument and very fit messengers betwixt me and the king to perfourme this my purpose. By whose wisdome and grauitie I wil haue mine Edward to be instructed & brought vp euen frõ his childhode, that all the dayes of his life he may haue continual warre with al thinges, that shal displease god. This chosẽ instrument of mine shalbe the first that shal bend his speare agaynst the forenamed mine vnpardonable enemie. Whose wonderful example most worthy to be folowed of al other, the rest of the pzinces of chzistendome shalbe astonied to beholde: & shal applie thẽselues to folowe his ẽterpzise, being encozaged by his worthy vertue. Neither shal it be nedfull foz him to vse any violence wherby to purge his kigdomes of these mischifes, lies, heresies, superstitiõs, Simonies, idolatries, wickednes, & betrayinge of soules, wherwith þ whole worlde was replenished by the meanes of this abhominable theefe. Foz all these thinges though they be very haynous, shall vanishe awaye sodaynly, and be brought to nothing at the cõming of the light of my word, whiche he shal alwaye vse as a continual burning light, bothe in this & al other his doinges. Happy therfore shal you Englishe men be, in that ye shall frame all youre assayzes earnestly to goddes glozye to þ saluatiõ of his chosẽ electes, & my worthy triũph.

Mich. So shall it bee.

And then shall that wycked be vttered, whom the lord shal cõsume with the spirite of his mouth, and shal destroy with the appearaunce of his cõmynge, euen hym whose comming is after the worckinge of Sathan.

Henry the eyght.
Papista.
Thomas Archebishoppe of Cantorbury.

WE haue sent for you in to oure presence, as for men, whiche haue more knowledge in ỹ scriptures and olde writers then the rest of oure realme, to resolue vs of a dout, that is come to our minde. Therefore two thynges we requier of you, the one that euerye of you saye hys mynde frankelye and frely, what he thinketh, without respecte of fauoure or displeasure to any manne lyuynge. And the other, that ye kepe it secrete, and disclose not one worde of the thinges, that shalbe here reasoned. For it is a matter of great weight, & toucheth our honour, wherfore we charge you so longe to keepe counsell vntill the truethe bee knowen, and that you haue lycense of vs to open it. There is a thought entred into oure head, which we bee perswaded cõmeth of god: That the Pope who heretofore hathe bene taken for a god in earth, is very Antichrist, and if we had certaine knowledge that this thinge were trewe, we would, as we are boũd, banniche him out of al the coastes of oure kingdome, not onely because he should no more robbe vs of our treasure: but muche rather, leste he shoulde any longer exercise tyranny in mens consciences, and bring suche a number of soules in daunger of euerlastinge damnacion. Yf he were the vycar of Christe in dede,

Henry.

we woulde be his louyng childzen from hence forth, as we haue bene in tymes past. Saye nowe euery of you youre myndes soberlye, and trewlye, what he thinketh.

Papi. I can not but meruayle very muche, when I heare youre princely maiestie make a doubt & question of matters, that bee moste cleare, questionles, and certaine. I can not perceaue ỹ it is lawfull to thinke, muche lesse to speake of suche a matter without doinge God open wrong. For such holy thinges, as the popehod is, ought to be worshipped, and not douted vpon and called in question.

Hen. A trueth if it be a truth, the diligentlier it is discussed and examined, the clerer the bryghter, and more plaine it appeareth. Therfore when we dispute of thys matter trueth hathe no wronge, but rather a benefit. Therfore if the pope bee in dede Chzistes vicar in earthe, the more seriously this trueth is reasoned of, the more plētifully shal it be published abzode, and all men shal more gladly & redely receaue it. So that we will neither do the pope wzonge, neither the truth, but shal rather shew thē both a singular pleasure. And it is not to bee douted, but ỹ heauēly thinges must be wozshipped, but now here is the question, whether the popeship be a heauēly thing oz not: & thys is ỹ matter, which we desier to haue discussed

Papi. Peraduenture your maiestie doeth minde, to accuse al our fozefathers, al kin3domes, & al Chzistē men of heresie, by whose iudgement the pope hathe alway bene, and is to this day, taken of Chzistes vicar in earthe.

Hen. That the trueth cōmeth to light, is not ỹ cause, that maketh men heretikes, but rather deliuereth thē from

from all erroꝛ, deceyte, hereſie, and betrayinge. And truely we deſier nothing els, then to haue the truthe boulted foꝛthe by all meanes poſſible. In the ende of our diſputacion, yf we ſhalbe aſſuered, that the pope is Chriſtes vicar, we wyll ſo take hym, as we haue done hetherto, and we ſhalbe muche moꝛe ſtrengthened in that opinion, without hurte of any creature. But if we ſhall perceaue the contrary: and be aſſured that he is Antichriſte in dede, then ſurely wil we indeuour our ſelues to ridde vs frō his tyranny, wherin we haue lyued hetherto takinghim to be a certaine god in earthe. And alſo all other erroꝛs, and incōmodities muſte be taken awaye, whiche ſpꝛynge out of this counterfecte belefe, and moꝛe ouer we wyl indeuour oure ſelues to ridde other men alſo from the ſame. So that I ſe not what can come of this diſputation, but that ſhalbe good and godly.

Papi. Trewly we might woꝛthely bee noted of a temerous arrogancie, if we ſhould thinke our ſelues hable to knowe and iudge better then a number almoſt infinit of woꝛthie men both in religion and doctrine, who without al queſtion beleued the popeſhip to be a heuenly thing. And moꝛe ouer, what opinion ſhall we conceaue of an innumerabe ſoꝛte of chriſtiā mē, which either now be, oꝛ els hath ben in times paſt and haue died in this fayth, oꝛ liue therein this daye. Surelye in ſo weyghtie a matter it behoueth vs to leue of diſputing, and fall to beleuinge.

Hen. Yf ſuch as beleued that the popeſhip was an heuenly thinge were deceaued, it is playne that they were neither lerned, noꝛ holy in that point. And therfoꝛe ought we in a matter of ſo great impoꝛtaunce, to open oure eyes, and be wiſer then they.

As for ỹ blind multitude, I thynke must not be folowed, who receyueth that manifest errour for an article of their fayth: but yf suche, as beleued that the pope was Christes Vicar in earth, were not deceyued: but being in thys opinion thought well: Surely we wyll take them both for learned and holy. We minde not by thys our disputacion, to take from them one iote either of their wisedom or holynes, but we shall rather bee confirmed and strenghtened in thesame good opinion, which we haue cõceyued, bothe of thẽ, and of the Popeshyp. Yf our intent be to ouercome them with the lyght and knowledge of the trueth to goddes glorye: puttynge not our trust in our owne strength, but in the onely goodnes of god: our godlye studie muste not be called a temerous boldnes. Nether doe I allowe the sayinge, that we ought simply to beleue it, that is to saye grossely for then shoulde the Turkes and Heritykes be excused. But as Paule sayeth, we must proue all, & take onely that is good.

Papi. Surely as for my part, I can not persuad my selfe in my conscience, that I maye put my tongue in heauen, and despute of the Popeshippe, as though I doubted of so great a matter.

Hen. Your diuines be not affrayed to put their mouthes and tongues bothe in heauen, and to dispute in their scoles and bokes, whether God be or not. And ỹ same thing dare your preachers also, euẽ in the pulpet, thoughe there be none that doubteth of so manyfest a trueth, & yet standeth it not with your consciences to reason in a breue disputacion of the Bysshoppe of Romes primacie. Maye it euer come to passe or not, ỹ the Pope shalbe so muche greater and higher then God, that it shall not bee lawfull to speake of

hys

hys primacie. And lawfull enoughe to dispute boldly of goddes essencie.

Papista. It is lawfull to dispute whether God bee or not. Without any remorse of conscience, and without daunger, because the reasons, whiche be brought for the contrary parte bee so weake: and the other so stronge, cleare, and pithie, wherby it is proued that god is, that after suche disputacion menne remayne muche more assured. But there can not be a disputacio of the primacie of the Bysshoppe of Rome without prickyng of conscience, bycause thys thynge is not so cleare and euident as the other is, that is to say, that there is a God. And perhappes yf it shoulde come in question, we should remayne in greater doubt, then we were before. Wherfore it shoulde seeme that it were better to lette the matter sleape, as it is, and not to question therof.

Hen. Then you your selues graunt that the Popeshyp is a doubtfull thynge, and agayne on the other syde ye woulde haue vs shut oure eyes, and beleue it, and imbrace it, and vndoubtedly to receyue it for an heauenly thynge. Yf the popeshyp were a thynge indifferent, whiche coulde neither hurte nor profyt the soule of manne, it shoulde seme no matter though we left reasonynge therof, and let it remayne quiet, as it is without disputacion. But for asmuche as vpon the Bysshoppe of Rome hangeth oure saluacion, yf he be Christes Uicar in earth, as they say he is: and agayne yf he be not, vpon hym contrarywyse hangeth oure dampnacion: we haue determined to know the trueth of the thynge. And so muche the more desirouse be we to haue thys disputacion goe forewarde, for that we see you so earnest to refuse the same. We may be well

assured

assured that we shall offend God in no poynt of thys disputacion, yf wee doe all thynges soberlye with a meke spirite to the glory of God, hauinge alwayes goddes worde for our iudge, whiche is the onely, and euerlastyng rule of trueth.

Papist Bycause it semeth good to youre maiestye, that it be so, I for my part haue nothynge els to say, but that the byshoppe of Rome is Christes Vicar in earthe with full power.

Her We knowe not whether he bee Christes Vycar or not, but to ẏ intent to haue a perfect knowledge therof, I haue sent for you. Of thys we be well assured, that the moste parte of them were excedynge vicious, we perceaue also that ẏ great eccleciastical reuenues, whiche of ryght belonge to the poorer sort of Christ, be by hym consumed and solde for ready money, and the cure of soules also, whome the sonne of god him selfe redemed with the pryce of hys bloude. And they be not affrayed to committe so weyghtie a charge (euen the cure of soules) to the children, which be euil borne, and worse broughte vp: And to menne vnlearned, wicked, and vicious, to horse kepers, and to their cinoedis, Sodomittical boies. We also know that he doeth not only sell his priuileges, relaxaciōs, composicions, and dispensacions: but hys Jublies, also, hys pardons, an d remissions of synne, his absolucions, hys blessinges, hys masses, hys buryalles, hys Sacramentes, yea and the merites and bloude of Christ and heauen it selfe. And it is well knowen that they haue caryed awaye great treasures out of our kyngdomes, we receyuyng nothynge agayne but ynke, and parchement, and seales of leade, vnder pretence of their buyldynges, and warres agaynst the

infideles

Infideles they haue polled more money from vs then all oure kyngdomes bee worthe. A blynde man maye see, what meanes they vse to robbe both quicke and dead. In so muche that of the house of God they haue made a denne of thieues. And all these thynges haue they done vnder a shadow of religiō, & a pretence of holines, Yf a man coulde open hys eyes, and loke vpon the discordes and striues, whiche they haue sowen in all christendome, and see the bloude, they haue shed, the slaunders and offēces, they haue committed, the soules, they haue lost, and the vicious life of them, that wylbe called moste holy, who ought to ieoparde their owne liues to profit their neighbour. Yf (I say) he coulde see howe they be couered with fraude, vnfaythfulnes, and deceate, howe they trouble all the whole worlde with suche thunderynges in contencions, as thoughe heauen and yearthe went together, and all for none other cause, but to encrease their yerely reuenewes, to preserue their falsely pretended honour, and their vayne titles. Surely he would not iudge them to be the Vicars of Christe, but rather to occupie the ruome of the great deuyll of hell.

Papista. Be it that their workes were neuer so wicked, yet cease they not therfore to be Christes vicars, yf their doctrine be sounde.

Henry. Yea mary, that is the thynge that we bee desirous to knowe, whether he be Christes Vicar or not. Whether he be Antichrist or not. Whether hys doctrine be true or false. Whether we ought to worshyp hym, or to banishe hym out of oure kyngdome. Therfore of these thynges we be desirous to heare other mennes myndes

Thomas Arche. When God determined to saue hys

electes, firste he disclosed himselfe by a certayne light shewed in the olde testament, by hys Prophetes, and holy men before he came into the worlde, and he mynded so to doe not onely, because he woulde be knowen a farre of, that menne shoulde put theyr trust in hym, and so be saued: but also that at hys commynge he myght be knowen agayne by the same sygnes and tokens, and the gentlier receyued, of a lyke sort when he determined for the larger settyng forth of his glorie to publish the triumph of Christ, & the perfect & happy state of his electes: he paynted forth and expressed lyuely in the holy scriptures, that suche as haue vnworthelye the name of christians muste haue one head in earth full of abhominacion and wickednes, to the intent that he beinge disclosed vnto vs, we shoulde not only not gyue credit vnto hym, but should by all meanes possible shunne hys wicked tiranny. Firste therfore as touchyng the place, god hath playnly declared vnto vs, that he must be borne at Rome. As Daniell the Prophet wrot, who discribed the foure monarches of the worlde vnder a similitude of foure beastes, that is to saye the Empire of Babilon, which was of the Assirians, The empire of the Persians, of the Grecians, and of the Romanes. And out of the head of the fourth beast (that is to say) out of the head of the monarchie of Rome, sprange a litle horne (that is to say) Antichrist himselfe. Who hath so auaunced his might and power, that he hath broke the power both of the other hornes, and also of the empire of Rome, and hath preuayled agaynst the godlye. The same thyng Paule the Apostle confirmeth, sayinge, before Antichrist be reueled, and apeare very stronge there muste be a departinge, or goinge awaye, that is to saye, the people

The place of Antichristes raigne. Dan. vii.

ii. Thess. ii.

people must fall awaye, or departe from thobedience of the Empier of Rome, as al holy men take it, wherfore of necessitie it must be graũted that he must haue his seate at Rome, for he shal succede the Emperour of Rome. Moreouer John in hys Apocalipse setting forthe the churche of Rome vnto vs, to bee not the spouse of Christ, but of Antichrist, sayth: that he saw a certaine whore the mother of all vnclennes & abhomynation of all the worlde, gorgeously arayed with golde and stone, holdinge a cuppe of gold in her hand, with whose migled liquour al the dwellers of the earthe shoulde bee made dronke from the highest to the lowest. And further thys whore shalbe made dronke with the blude of Sainctes, & of the martyrs of Christ. And vpon her forehed she had wrytten Babilonia. And leste any man shoulde doubt, whether John spake of Rome, or not, he sayeth playnely that the whore sat vpon seuen hilles, which thinge is wel knowen to be agreable to Rome, wherupon it is called the citie of seuen hilles. Wherefore hys seat must be at Rome. Whiche thynge is euident bothe by holy scripture, and also by Hierome in an epistle, that he wrot to Fabiola agaynste Iouinian, to Marcella, to Algasia, in the. 47. Chapter of hys commentaryes vpon Esay, and in the second Chap. vpon Osee. The same thinge is confirmed by thauthoritie of Tertulian, wryting against the Jewes and the gentiles, in a boke of the resurrection of the body. And of S. Augustine also in hys bokes de ciuitate Dei. In thesame opinió also is Nicholaus de Lyra vpõ Daniell, & many other besides. And if we wil way Paules wordes diligently, we shall also knowe the tyme, wherin Antichrist muste be disclosed to the worlde. For wry-

Apo. xviii.

Apoc. xvii.

Cap. xxxv.

Li. 20. cap. 16

The time of Antichristes disclosinge

ting to the Thessalonians, that thought Christ should shortlye come to iudgement, and mindynge to bringe them out of that opinion sayeth, that there shall a departinge come before the daie of iudgement. That is to saye that men must fal from the Empier of Rome, as Hierom, Anselme, Theophilact, Bede, Dionise, & almoste all the rest of the interpreters take it. Trewe it is, that Paule spake thys thynge darkely leste he should offende mens myndes. Therefore then (sayth Paule) that great wycked bodye shall shewe forthe him selfe. Yea and he shall not onely succede especially at Rome in hys owne strength: but also, as Daniell writeth, he shall destroye and bringe to nothynge the reste of the hornes, and strength of the Empier of Rome. So that we nowe see playnely enough, that the people hathe not only shronke from the obedience of the Emperoure of Rome: but also that the emperours haue had no dominion in Rome more thē this seuen hundreth yere. The byshoppes haue occupied the place in the stead of the Emperours, by the which bysshoppes chefelye the emperoures power hathe bene minished. Wherefore we muste graunt that they bee ryght antichriste. Besides this Christe himselfe hath expressed, and paynted forthe Antichriste, and al his qualities in holye scriptures with so lyuely colours, that who so seeth the pope, & hath neuer so litle light of knowledge, and seeth his properties, can not chose but he muste also knowe that he is very Antichriste. And to speake sumwhat of hym generally: Euen as Christe is the heade of all hys electes, so shall Antichriste be the head of al them, that be reiected of god, whiche bee falsely named Christians. As in Christe all thresours of knowledge, and wisedome of god be hidden:

ii. Thess. ii.

Dani. vii.

The properties and qualities of Antichriste.

Ephes. iii.

Colo. ii.

hidden: So in antichrist shalbe hidden with a couer of hipocrisie al mischefes, craftes, and deceites, giles, and falsnes, whiche be in the great deuell of hel himselfe. And moreouer, as the holy goste is geuē to Christ, and powred into hym without measure and not hēmed in with any boundes or limites: and as Christe is full of grace and truethe, yea in hym dwelleth all fulnes of perfecte vertue and perfection: So there dwelleth in Antichriste, all vices, wickednes, abhominations, deceytes, and lyes without all measure. So that as Christe is the very trewe and lyuelye ymage of God, so shall Antichriste bee the very trew and lyuely ymage of the deuell. Wherefore Esaye calleth hym the wycked one. Dauyd also wryteth hym to bee the heade of all wyckednes. Danyell, and Christe hymselfe call hym abhomynacyon it self. Paule calleth hym the wycked manne, the childe of perdition, not onelye because he shalbee loste hymselfe, but because he shall also destroye all them that shall folowe hys steppes and doctryne. And also Saincte John called hym Antichrist, that is to saye, a contrary enemye, and a repugninge aduersarye to Christe: and beecause he especyallye aboue all other creatures shall shewe hym selfe to bee an enemy and an aduersarye to Christe: therefore in that hys excedynge contraryousnes agaynste Christe, he is called Antichriste. Nowe, as Christ was conceaued of the holy gooste, and borne of the vyrgyne Marye: So shall antichriste be conceaued of the spirite of the deuil, & borne of Simony, & ambition, which shalbe in the mindes of thē, ꝑ shal declare him pope. Then shal ꝑ pope be created of ꝑ most corrupt & infected congregation of people, that is, whom they cal Cardinalles,

John. i. Colo. i. Esa. xi. Psal. x. Dan. xi. ii. Thess. ii. i. John. ii.

who as thoughe they were the very pillers of mischiefe, shal sustayne al the worlde, and all the wickednes therof vpon their shoulders. They saye thys order was created of god, when he sayed: The pyllers of the earth be of the Lorde, and vpon them he layed the foundacion of the worlde, hereby it is easie to bee sene, whether they vnderstande rightly the holy scriptures, or els wryth thē violently to their croked purpose. Who so shall reade their histories, and will diligently consider by what craft, hipocrisie, & dissimulacion, fayre promises, gyftes, deceyt and prodicion, and suche lyke wicked meanes they haue achiued to thys Popeshyp, whiche they so muche desired, he shal easely perceaue of what spirite they were both conceyued and begotten. Yea they haue gyuen themselues wholye to the deuill so ỹ they might once come to the Popeshyp: As it is playnely written of Syluester the seconde. He that could see by what spirite the Popeshyp was conceyued in the myndes of menne, and appeared to the worlde: shoulde soone knowe whether it be a thynge of God, or of manne, or of the the deuyl. Foure hundreth and foure score yeres after the birth of Christ, that litle horne of Daniel, that is to say, the Bysshoppe of Rome had but litle strength and power of manne, because they had none authoritie but onely in their owne dioceses, as other Bishoppes haue. But about the yere of our Lorde. 480. Odoacer reignynge in Rome, it chaunced that Achatius Bysshoppe of Cōstantinople (who then was placed first amongest the Bysshoppes, and yet vsed no authoritie ouer them) woulde haue condempned Peter the Bysshoppe of Alexandria of hercsie. And bycause the Bysshoppe of Rome for the worthynes of the Citie was then in some

some estimacio: the Bysshop of Constantinople wrote to Symplicius then being Bysshoppe of Rome, desirynge hym that he woulde lykewyse declare the Bysshoppe of Alexandria an Heretyke. And of thys hath ambitious felowes taken occasion (unworthely God he knoweth) to dispute of the authoritie of the Bysshop of Rome. And so farre haue they gone forward in their ambicion, that they haue not bene ashamed falsely to contend, that they are the heades of al other churches. And on the other syde stode they, whyche toke partes with the Bysshoppe of Constantinople affirmynge their Bysshoppe, and not the Bysshoppe of Rome to be the supreme head of all other churches. Thys ambicious contencion continued amongest these most holy fathers, a hundreth & twelue yeres. And at the last about the yere of our Lorde sixe hundreth, when Maurice the Emperour was in Grecia, Jhon the Bysshoppe of Constantinople gathered all the Bysshoppes of Grecia togethyr at Constantinople, and there was the Bishop, of Constantinople and not the Bysshop of Rome, ordeyned of them to be the Bysshoppe of all other churches. But when Maurice wylled the Bysshoppe of Rome to submitte hymselfe and hys churche to the Bysshoppe of Constantinople, Gregory who then was Bysshoppe of Rome withstode it, & called hym ỏ fore runner of Antichrist. And thesame Gregory wrytynge to the Bysshoppe of Antioch & Alexandria, amongest al other thing sayth: ye knowe that in the counsell of Calcedon the tytle of the vniuersall Bysshoppe was offered to the Bysshop of Rome, whiche he woulde in no wyse receyue, neither was there any of our predecessors ỷ dyd vsurpe that tytle. Yea euen then (as they saye) to confounde

and

and rubuke ẏ pride of other, he begā to be named the seruaunt of the seruauntes of God. Howe be it hys successor, Boniface the thirde, a manne to ambicious, and craftie, obteyned of Phocas the Emperour by suttill trayne the dignitie of a Pope. What maner of manne thys Phocas the Emperour was it appeareth of hys historye. By violence, fraude, and treason, he came to the Empire, and caused Maurice the Emperour most cruelly, and most wickedly, and his wife, and all his children to be kylled before his owne face. Thys was the holy manne, who first gaue this goodly creature of the Popeshyp to the world. And this is true, ẏ vntill the dayes of Constātine the fourth Emperour, the Byshoppe of Rome was wont to be confirmed of the Emperour. Howe be it at the request & intreatie of Benet the second of Rome, the foresayed Constantine graunted to ẏ Benet and hys successors, that they shoulde be receyued, and taken of all menne for Popes without the Emperours confirmacion. And so by litle & lytle they crepte vp so highe by their craftie diligence, that the Emperour must bothe bee confirmed, and crowned of the Pope, but yet it is necessary that first he take an othe, that he wyll defende the Popehod. Therfore it is not harde to be knowen, what maner of spirite it was, that brought the popeshyppe into the worlde, and howe the creacion of the Pope, and of the Popeshyp is contrary to the birthe of Christe. Namely when (as Paule writeth) Christe glorified not hymselfe, neither thrust him selfe to be a byshop, but takynge example of Aaron he taried vntyll he was called of hys father. But these men thrust themselues in violently vntyll they haue made them selues not onely equall with Christe, but also aboue

Christ

Chriſte. Chriſte beinge in the ſhape of god, dyd caſte downe hymſelfe willingly, and would take the ſhape of a ſeruant vpon him: But this fellowe being in the forme of a man, whiche is a moſte abiect and vile ſinner, ſo proudly hathe anaunced hymſelfe aloſte that he is not aſhamed to bragge hym ſelfe to bee a highe light, and a god in earth. And if we will conſider, and waye the lyfe, the maners, and the workes of Chriſt, and the pope, we ſhall fynde them altogether quiet contrary the one to the other. Chriſte was innocente, poore, and would not trouble himſelfe with worldly buſinelles, but was altogether bent to the helthe of ſoules, whome he deſiered to enrich with heuenly threaſure, he was meke, gentle, refuſing both crown and kingedome, neuer had he any priuat affection of fauour, either towardes himſelfe, or others his kinſfolke, or towardes any manne lyuynge, beinge inflamed with a great force of the heauenly ſpirit always ſought he the glory of God the father eternall. He was a peacemaker, ſober, ſubiecte to all men for the honour of hys father: mercifull, and very prone and redye to be pitifull, and therefore he wept vpon Hieruſalem, he was godly, ſhamfaſt, chaſte, moſt liberal, full of loue, and all other vertues. But al the popes be in all poyntes diuerſe, & quite contrary to all theſe vertewes of Chriſte. For there is a rotten dongehill, and puddell within them of all vncleannes, wickednes, and miſchefe, as it is ryght well knowen to them, that haue any knowledge of them, that be now a dayes, and reade the hyſtoryes and lyues of them, that be paſt: and all thoughe they be very contrary to Chriſt in theſe thinges, that I haue ſpoken of, more then other men be, that is to ſay, in all outward actiõ

of vertue, yet in theyr doctrine, & certayne other theyr wicked abhomynations they bee moste wycked, and moste contrary of all. For there be certayne wickednesses peculier vnto them, which be of exceding great weyght, & be so hainouse, that they be mete for none other, but for these theues onely. Wherefore it is vere necessary to graunte them onely to be the very and chief antichristes for these only be they, who corruptinge the scripture, and withstandyng the expresse word of god, haue plucked Christ with theyr wicked handes out of hys highe and gloryouse seate, and yet not being contented with that horryble mischief they haue caste downe, oppressed, and buried, and haue bannished quit out of the eyes, and memories of man the redemer of all mankinde, and haue placed themselues in Christes seat, gyuinge to themselues, and with force challenginge lyke tyrannes, all that dignitie, whiche parteyneth to Christe alone. Yea they haue made themselues aboue Christe. So that in conclusion, they woulde not only seme equal to god, but also haue auaunced them selfes with a deuelishe and intollerable boldnes aboue god. That this thing is, as I saye, it is euident. For the bodye of Christes churche hathe but one heade, otherwyse it should bee a monstrowse deformed thynge, the lyke wherof hath not been hearde of: and shoulde not bee a body knit together with a trewe proporcion of the membres. But Christe is the trewe, and onely heade of his church, as Paule doth playnely wryt, that out of thys heade is the spirite, lyfe, lyghte, and rightuousnes powred into all the other membres of the chosen. For he is our lyfe, lyght, and ryghtuousnes. Nowe on the othersyde the pope sayeth: I am the heade of the church militant: Yf ye wyl haue lyght, and

Ephe. iiii.

Iohn. xiiii.
Iohn. viii.
i. Cor. i.

and knowledge of heauenly thynges, ye muste come to me. For I onelye am a boue all learned and holye menne, aboue the counselles, and aboue holy scriptures it selfe, yea and also aboue youre fayth. Wherfore ye must beleue accordinge to my worde, and although the wordes of holy scripture be the wordes of god, yet must they be expounded and declared after my fashyon, and as I say. I am onelye he, whiche canne not erre. Wherefore as concerning matters of faythe euery manne ought to shit his eyes, and truste to my worde, and sticke thereunto vndoutedly. The pope sayeth more ouer: yf any manne bee deade in the sight of god, and a synner, let hym come to me, and out of hand by the helpe of my absolutions, and pardōs he shal liue, and be made rightuouse in the sight of god. As thoughe he shoulde saye, I am your light and rightuousnes, and not Christ. What thinge doth pulle Christe violentlye out of his place, and thrust in hymselfe, if thys doe not? Christe is oure chiefe and euerlasting priest, as it is wrytten of him. Who, whē he had once offred hymselfe vpon the crosse, founde out euerlastinge redemption for vs, and satisfied for oure synnes, and pleased the wrath of god the father for euer: The pope sayeth I am the chiefe byshoppe of the churche of Christ, ẏ sacrifice that Christ made was not sufficyent to satysfye for synne, and pacyfy the wrathe of God. And therefore haue I ordeyned the sacryfice of the masse, and other offeringes, and meritoriouse workes. To doe thus is not onely to plucke Christ out of his place, & put in him selfe: but it is also a manifest confession that Christe was not an imperfecte prieste, bec ause that with hys sacryfice he made not suffycient satysfaction for oure synnes, neyther pacifyed the wrathe of god enoughe, and

Psal. cix. Hebr. v.

Hebr. x.

 therefore

therefore hathe he nede of the Popes helpe yea, and it is also a confession, that the holy goste in holy scripture was a lyer, whiche thinge is nothinge elles, but a mynde to place himselfe aboue god. For the pope canne neyther lye, neither erre in matters of faythe, and god dyd bothe lye, and erre by hys confession. Chriſte, also is the onely mediator betwyxt god and manne, as it is written. No manne commeth to the father, but by thys mediatour, he is the waye and the gate, that leadeth to God, he is oure aduocat, oure propiciacion, oure holynes, oure redemption and helthe. He onelye is oure Jesus, and sauiour, neither is oure saluacion in any other, but in hym onelye, as Peter wryteth. And therefore Chryste calleth all menne to hym, sayinge come to me all ye, that labour and be burdenid with the burden of synne, and I wil geue reste and quietnes vnto you. who so thurſteth for saluacion, let hym come to me, and he shalbee refreshed. But the Pope contrarywise sayeth, I am he, by whome ye may pacifye the wrathe of god, by me onelye, and by my ministers ye maye obteyne remission of youre synnes. I am the waye, that leadeth to heauen, I haue the keyes of the kingdome of heauen. I canne open and shute at my pleasure, to whome, when, and after what sorte it shall please me. By me onelye ye maye haue lyfe euerlastynge, and god wylbee mercifull, and pleased with you. Neyther wyll I that ye shall haue Chriſte alone youre mediator and aduocat in heauen: but I wyll that ye chose some amongest them, that bee dead, suche as lyke you best, so that they bee canonized by me, and take them for your mediatours, intercessours, protectours, aduocates, and patrones. I wyll also that ye seke for

1. Timo. ii.
Iohn. xiiii.
1. Iohn. ii.
1. Cor. i.

Act. iiii.

Mat. xi.

Iohn. vii.

foꝛ youre ſaluacion not in Chꝛiſte alone, (thoughe Peter ſaye playnly that it canne be founde in none other) but chiefly in me, in my abſolucios, benedictios, and pardons, and in youre owne woꝛkes alſo, and in the meꝛites, and interceſſion of Saynctes. Wheꝛfoꝛe come to me, all that be troubled with ſoꝛowe of conſcience, and in me ye ſhall finde peace. Nowe whether all theſe thynges be moſt cruell, wicked, and blaſphemouſe oꝛ not, he maye eaſly perceyue, that is not altogether blynde. Theꝛfoꝛe it is moſt true, that Daniell ſayed ſpeakynge of hym, that he ſhoulde bee ſuche a ſhameles blaſphemoꝛ, that he ſhould ſpeake agaynſte God hymſelfe. And we alſo knowe, that accoꝛdynge to the doctrine of Paule euery chꝛiſtian manne is the temple of god, and of a lyke ſoꝛt the congregacion of the faythfull, is called the churche of God: and we ſe that the Pope reygneth in the heaꝛtes of ſome chꝛiſtiā men, which woꝛſhip him euen now, as their God. And alſo wee ſee not onelye howe he reygneth in the heaꝛtes of ſundꝛye menne, but alſo in the middeſt of the churche militant as the ſupꝛeme of all creatures. Theꝛefoꝛe it is fullye accomplyſhed and perfoꝛmed, that Paule ſpake of hym, when he wꝛote ꝑ he ſhould ſitte in the temple God (not in the temple buylded by mannes handes at Hieruſalem: but in ꝑ heaꝛtes of men, and in the militant church of Chꝛiſt) as though he were God, and bꝛaggeth hymſelf beforꝛe menne as bery God. And bycauſe theſe thynges, whiche Paule ſayed, can not be applied to none other in the woꝛlde: it muſt of neceſſitie be graunted, that he onely is the ſame ryghte and great Antichꝛiſte, and the bery ſelfe ſame hoꝛꝛible abhominacion of whom Chꝛiſt pꝛopheſied that he ſhould ſtabliſhe hys ſeat in the holy place.

Dani. vii.

ii. Theſſa. ii.

Mat. xxiiii.

Neither was it ynough for hym to thrust hym selfe in to Christes place, and to auaūce himselfe aboue god: but also he woulde depraue the holy scriptures, & be in all poyntes quite contrary to Christ. That all these thynges bee true hereof it maye appeare. Euen as Christe hath left nothynge vnproued for vs, whiche are necessary for the mayntenaunce of oure naturall lyfe, so is it to be beleued that muche lesse he woulde leaue anye of those necessaries vnprouyded, whiche shoulde apartayne to the spirituall lyfe. Therefore must we beleue that god hath declared vnto vs in the holy scriptures as much, as is nedefull, whereunto no creature must adde, neither take awaye one word, as God by Moses doth comaunde, for they only be in all poyntes perfect. Therfore Paule writinge to Timothie saieth. All scripture inspired from aboue is profitable to rebuke and amende, to instruct in righteousnes, that a manne, who is dedicate to God, maye be vpryght and perfect in all good workes. Then by the doctrine of Paule it is playne that those thynges, which be conteyned in the holy scripture be sufficient to make a manne perfecte: whiche thynge must nedes be graunted, for Christe disclosed to hys Apostles as to hys beloued frendes and children, all that he receiued of hys father. And afterwarde he opened their myndes by hys spirite, and declared vnto them the true meanyng of those thynges, which the same apostles dyd writ, preache, and publiche abrode plentifully: So that the gospell is moste perfecte and full, as Paule wrote to the Hebrues. And as for the pope he is all together contrary to all these thynges, that be spoken. First and formost he sayeth that holy scripture is imperfect, and is not sufficient to declare fully

Deu. xii.

2. Tim. iii.

Antichriste saith that the scripture is insufficient.

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all mattiers that belonge to ſaluacion, and that he can adde vnto it, as he hathe done, when he allowed thoſe bokes that be apocripha, and of none authoritie, for holy bokes, as though they were in the canon. And alſo when he made an innumerable ſorte of decrees, and decretalles, and commaundementes of manne, and articles of our fayth. And he ſayeth more ouer (thoughe it be cloſly) that the twelue articles of the faythe deliuered and preached by the Apoſtles be not ſufficient to ſaluacion. And then the Apoſtles bee damned & all chriſtian men, who hath not receyued the lyghte of the articles, obſeruacions, and commaundemeintes of the Pope. So that it muſt folowe (in the name of God) that the Popes were wyſer then Chriſt hym ſelfe, or at the leaſt wyſe were more mercifull, bycauſe they haue opened ſo many thynges to the worlde, whiche bee (as they ſaye) neceſſarye to oure ſaluacion, and neuer opened neither by Chriſte nor god. But what a miſcheuous dede is it, that all theſe articles of the faythe made by the Pope, bee all together repugnaunt, and quite contrarye to the articles of the Apoſtles, and to all holy ſcripture, as it is well knowen. For briefely in the Creade, and in holye ſcripture it is comprehended, that it is god by whoſe goodnes and grace throughe Chriſte (who ſuffered death for vs, who roſe againe, and aſcended into heauen, and ſitteth on the ryghte hande of God the father) all creatures muſte receyue ſaluacion, and alſo kele hys plentiful loue towardes vs, through the holy goſt, and that he, who beleueth in Chriſt, ſhal haue lyfe euerlaſtyng as he hym ſelfe is a witnes. But the contentes of the Popes articles bee all together contrary to thys geare, that is to ſay: that fayth in Chriſt

Antichriſte corrupteth the articles of our fayth

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is not sufficient to saluacion, and that it is necessarye to beleue, that the Pope hath authoritie ouer all. And that we must beleue accordyng to the doctrine of ỹ Pope, that neither the grace of Christ, nor the death of Christ is sufficient to saluacion, but that our meritorious workes must also of necessitie be added, with confession deuised by the Pope, and hys absolutions, pardons, and prayer to Sayntes, and besydes all thys the fire of purgatory. And that the holy goste (as they saye) is not enoughe for the vnderstandynge of holy scripture, and to knowe the wyll and pleasure of God: but that the Pope must expounde all thynges.

Dani. xi. No manne canne denye, but thys is a very settinge of him selfe aboue God. Daniel wrote wonderfull learnedly of hym: saying that he shall induce men noughtely and wickedly to breake their promises, that they haue made to God. For euen as God, who is the well springe of all goodnes, promised in Abraham to be our god, that he woulde take ỹ charge of euery one of vs, & woulde gyue himself for vs, makyng vs partakers of all hys felicitie: And we agayne haue promised hym, that we wyll be hys people, to aske and loke for al goodnes at his hand only, to acknowledge him onely our God, and will gyue thankes, and render honor & wurshyp to him alone. On thother side the pope sayeth naye to this geare, that God is angry with vs, and that Christ coulde not sufficiently pacifie hys wrath, but that the Pope must helpe with his authoritie, and the Sayncte with their prayers, and merites, & also we our selues with our good workes, and also the deuells with theyr fyer of purgatory. Therfore is it very trewe that Daniel sayd, that he should chaunge the tymes, (he shoulde transpose the tyme

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of grace into the tyme of the lawe, the tyme of light into the tyme of darknes. Neyther thinke they it a dede mischieuouse enoughe, to make newe articles of the faythe, at theyr pleasure contrary to thartícles of god: excepte also they depryaue the lawe of god with their preceptes, and commaundementes, which commaundementes be also contrary to the commaũdementes of God. For it is without controuerly, that all the lawe of God doeth depende vpon the loue towardes god, and towardes oure neighbour, and the pope myndynge to destroye bothe the partes of the lawe of god, hathe infected purposely these two chiefe groundes, vpõ the which hange al the lawe, & the prophetes. For he affirmeth cõtrary to therpresse worde of God, ỹ god requireth not necessarely of vs that we shoulde loue hym with all our hart, with all oure soule, and all oure mynde: but that we shoulde loue hym aboue al other thynges, affirminge that to be the commaundemente, and to loue god with all oure hearte is but a counsell. And as touchinge oure neyghbour, of a lyke sort he sayeth, that it is a counsell, and a perfection, and not cõmaundement to loue oure enemy with all our harte, but that onelye we ought to shewe outward tokens of loue towardes our enemyes. And agayne, whereas the lawe is most perfect there sayth he, that it is vnperfecte, & therfore he holdeth that it is lawfull and that wee ought to adde some thing vnto it, and to doe some workes besydes them that be commaunded in the lawe of god, whiche be called supererogatory workes, that is to say workes, that be not commaunded. For this cause hathe he deliuered new rules to the world, new trades of lyuyng, ordinaunces, and commaundementes,

Antichrist corrupteth the lawes of God.

suche (it may chaunce) as he dremed, when he was in some frensy, vtterlye pugnant, & cõtrary to ỹ cõmaũdementes of god, wheras god commaunded himself onely to be wurshipped: he will also be wurshipped
Exod. xx of vs, and moreouer commaundeth vs, that we shall not onely worship Sainctes, but also theyr dead bodies, and relikes. God wilieth and commaundeth vs, that we shal make no ymage, neither of himselfe, neither of any other creature, any picture or similitude to be worshipped: The pope willeth & commaundeth ymages and pictures of Sainctes to be made, to bee set vp all aboute in the churche in euery corner, there to be wurshipped, that no place there bee voyde of ydolatrye. Of a lyke sorte god commaundeth that no man should take hys name in vayne, that is to saye, when a man promyseth any thynge by an othe takinge god to witnes, he muste kepe the thinge, that he promyseth: but the pope denieth that promes ought to be kept with heretikes, (as he taketh heretikes) that is to saye, with true Christian men: willinge and commaunding with expresse wordes, to deceaue thẽ, that they maye be betrayed, and burned, thoughe he haue sworne the cõtrary neuer so much, taking god, and all saynctes to witnes. Yea he doeth pardon, forgeue, and absolue men from theyr rightfull othes in honest ciuile matters, so that it redounde to hys profite and glory, & that he be rewarded lyberally therfore. God commaunded the Sabboth day to be kept holy. And sence Jesus Christ ỹ sõne of righteousnes appered to the worlde, we ought to iudge all tymes
Rom. xiii. of grace to be a most holy Sabboth, & to take all the times of our life without putting diuersitie betwene one daye and another to be all together holy, and to

spend

spende all together in the honour and glory of God. But the pope commaundeth the contrary, that there shalbe a diuersitie betwene dayes, and tymes in holynes, that some daies shalbe halowed, yet with none other kinde of religion, but idelnes, idolatry, & superstition, in the remembraunce of some feast deuised by hym, or of some Sayncte, that he hathe canonized, all other tymes he taketh not to bee holye. God commaundeth honour to be geuen to the father and mother, and obedience to princes, whiche be ordeyned of hym. The pope contrarywyse willeth, that the chyldren may, contrary to the myndes of theyr parentes professe some superstitiouse, & deuelish kinde of relygion, and remaine tyed therein to theyr wicked vowes, yea though theyr father and mother pine for hungar, and want the comfort of theyr children by the reason of extreme necessitie. He will also haue all his priestes, monkes, and nunes to be free, & discharged from all obedyence to theyr prince, and magistrates, whiche be ordeyned of god. God commaundeth that no man shall kyll: but this bloudy paricide, and mankiller, being made dronke with the bloud of martirs, and of Christian men graunteth full pardon to mankillers and parricides, & to suche, as saye they fought vnder the banner of the crosse of Christe, that by the meanes of thys deuelishe licence he may increase, and amplify hys cruell tyrannye. God forbiddeth adultery, and all vncleannes, & commaundeth by the mouth of Paule hym, who hathe not the gifte of chastitie to to mary a wyfe: but this shameles baude dothe the contrary, he forbiddeth marriage to al, that be anoynted of hym, whether they haue the gift of chastitie or not, as thoughe mariage were an vnholy, and an

1. Cor. vij.

vncleane thynge, and not muche more holy, and more honest, then is their wiueles lyfe, and as thoughe accordinge to the doctrine of Paule, matrimonie were not honorable, holye, and vndefyled in all states. Yet in the meane space he graunteth to suche as hange vpon hym, all kindes of beastlynes, and fylthye vncleanes. And also at sundrye tymes of the yere, and within sundry degrees deuised by him, he forbiddeth maryage for none other intent, but to kepe hys honor in estimacion, and to get greate sũmes of money by dispensinge therewith. God commaundeth that no mã shal beliere another mans goodes: but this theefe vnder the pretence of Annates, Dimes, Pardones, Jubelies, compositions, absolutions, dispensations, priuileges, blessinges, greues, and deuelish coactiõs, he ouer runneth, and robbeth al the whole worlde.

And as sone as these goodes bee gotten, or rather stolen together, come he by them by robbinge or stealinge never so: yet be they straycht waye made holy, & so holy, ỹ they may not bee alienated without this theues licence. But why stand I so longe in this matter? For to knit vp so great a matter in fewe wordes, whereas Christ came not to breake the lawe, but rather to fulfyll it, he corrupted, infected, and depraued al the whole law. Whereas Christe did abrogate ỹ ceremoniall preceptes of the Jewes: he hathe brought in al the deuelish superstitions of the gentiles. Therfore is that vndoutedly trewe, that Daniell spake of him, that he shoulde chaunge the lawes. And he is not contẽt to profesſe opẽly, that the merites of Christ be not enough, & that he fulfilleth the thing, ỹ wãteth in thẽ: except he maye further haue his saing ỹ he is ỹ Guarde and the destrybutour of thesame merites of

Math. b

Dani. vii.

Christ

Chriſt, and that it is hys office to applye them for the quicke and the dead, as he ſhall thynke good, as who ſhoulde ſaye that Chriſt can not applye them, or els that he would not prouide for the health of ſoules, ſo that there is moche more charitie in the Pope, then in Chriſt. What nedeth ſo many wordes? Chriſte neuer had, nor neuer ſhall haue, neither was there euer a greater enemie in the worlde to the goſpell, then he is. He hathe continuall warre with thē, that beleue in Chriſt, and with all, that bee godly and vertuous, and them he ouercommeth with deceyte and crueltie, as Daniell ſayed of hym before. Wherfore we be bound to confeſſe that he is the trewe greate Antichriſte hymſelfe. Dani.xi.

Papi. Then erred the counſelles, where in it was decreed, that he ſhould be Pope.

Thoarch. That is as muche to ſaie as: Then erred the Byſhoppes and Pharyſeis, when they gathered a counſel together, and determined to crucifie Chriſt. I praye you doeth that ſeme ſo ſtraunge a thynge, to confeſſe that they haue erred, whiche bee Byſhoppes by name onely, but in dede tyrannes and wolues, and wretched verlettes ioyned together in their ſeſſions onely to maynteyne and ſtablyſhe their tiranny, wyckedly deprauynge the worde of God. Yf youre counſelles can not erre, howe commeth it to paſſe, that many tymes one of them hathe made contrary lawes to an other. And yf one counſell be contrary to an other, as they be in dede, it muſt bee graunted, that one of them erred. Where as they ſpeake purpoſely of the Pope, the counſell of Affryke made a lawe, that the Byſhop of Rome ſhoulde not onely not be Pope, but alſo that he ought not to haue that name.

Then either erred that counsell, or yours. Truely the wyll I beleue your counsell is gathered together by ỹ holy gost, a erred not, when I shall perceyue that it was not reuled, and lead by your sensuallitie, ambicious sekynge of honor, and by gyftes and rewardes, but by the worde of God: Yf you woulde expounde the scriptures to the contempt of youre selfe, and to the glory of God, I woulde thynke the matter might bee well taken. But if ye will be the Judges of holy scriptures, and then wyll expounde thesame, as your dulnes, tirannye, and selfe wyll shall leade you, wrythynge the worde of God otherwise, then the trewe sence, and meanyng therof leaedeth you to the increasynge, and establyshement of your tyrannye, mynding to vsurpe the dominion of the earth, heauen, and hell, that ye maye be worshypped in earthe as goddes, to the great rebuke of god: I doubt not but that you are gathered together in the spirite of the deuill. And you intende to proue to me, the Pope to be Pope by authoritie of the counsel. But those thinges that be established in the counsell (as you saye) be of none effecte, onles the Pope confirme them: but the Pope canne not confirme them onles he first be Pope: Therfore tell me first howe the Bysshoppe of Rome was made Pope, and howe he can not erre in confirminge the decrees of the counselles: and then maye ye proue the Popeship by the counsells, for otherwyse is your argument playne false, or at the least waye so made in a circle, that in disputacion it beginneth agayne, where it began before to no purpose

Papi. Yf it were so that the Bisshoppe of Rome were Antichrist in dede (as you saye) yet for asmuche, as he hathe bene accounted of Christian menne for Pope so

many

many hundreth yeres, and the chiefe Bysshoppe of all other: then the churche of Christe had decayed longe agone contrary to hys promes, who sayed I am with you vnto the worldes ende.

Tho. arch. As touchyng this poynte, the same answere shallbee made to you nowe, that was made in tymes past to Helias when he thought none aliue to imbrace the faythe of God, but himselfe alone, to whome God sayed, I haue preserued to my self seuen thousandes, who hath not bowed their knees before Baal. Euen so is it nowe, for in Europe, Affrike, and Asia, there were alwayes manye christian menne, who worshipped not Antichrist.

Papi. What were they al Heretikes?

Thomas arch. They were by youre sayinge, for they woulde neither obey Antichriste, neither beleue purgatory, neither woulde they kepe the feaste of Easter vpon the sondaye

Hen. Ye haue reasoned now enough and enough: now we see playnly, that this felowe, of whom we moued this questiō was, is very right Antichrist. Frō hence forth we wil in no wise consent to his euilnes, lest god continue his anger agaynst vs. We haue suffered to longe a great deale so intolerable a tiranny. We will proue suerly whether he be God, i yearth or not. And whether we haue more full authoritie in oure owne dominions, and kingdomes then he hath, or not.

Papi. Then shal your maiestie loose your title of defender of the fayth

Hen. Nay we wil be called the destroyers of the false faythe of Antichriste, and maynteners of the trewe fayth of Christe.

Edward

Kynge Edwarde the sixte.

The counseylours.

EdVVarde Kynge.

Lexander the greate dyd sette so muche by the honor, and glory of the worlde, that when his father Philippe ouercame moe and moe Cities, and contryes daylye, and all other men reioysed very much of his victories. Yet he alone beinge of tender age lamented very muche therfore (not withstandinge that he ought to haue bene ioyful and glad, beinge his fathers onelye heire of all his kyngdomes (thynkynge that hys father woulde preuent him, and take awaye all occasions from hym, whereby he might compasse the dominion of the worlde by his owne wit and industrie, wherof sh oulde insewe worthye renowne, and immortall memorie, esteminge a kingdome as nothing without glorye: But for asmuche, as it hathe pleased God to lighten our minde with the cleare brightnes of heauenly doctrine, & therby to geue vs knowledge that he hath placed vs in this seat of a kynge, that we shoulde direct the vse of oure scepter royall, and the sterne of oure gouernemente not to the glorye of the worlde, but to the glorye of hym: so muche more we, be studious of the glorye of God, aboue the glorie of the world, as we knowe that the one is heauenly, excellent, and durable, and the other vayne, slydynge awaye, and able to continue but for a while. And we can not but lament euen from the botom of our heart

euen

euen in this tender age of ours, when we see our one-
lye Lorde, and sauiour Jesus Christe with no small
rebuke of hys heauenlye and eternall father driuen
out of his seat, & kingdom: & such a cruell, and wicked
tyraunte placed in hys roume. Wherfore we be very
desierfull to restore Christ into his owne former place
agayne, that by him god may be honoured, not myn-
dinge in any wise to suffer suche abhominacion to re-
mayne within oure dominions. All Christian menne
haue euer more abhorred the name of Antichrist: and
shall we haue hym at home with vs. knowinge hym
to be suche a one, as he is, and shall leue hym vnban-
nished out of the coastes of our countryes. That shal
neuer be. Surely all the treasures, honours, frende-
shippes, pleasures, and all the happie condicions of
thys worlde canne neuer make vs happye, no not so
muche as in thys lyfe, so longe as we see not Christe
him selfe, & not Antichrist, reigne in the hartes of his
subiectes. The maiestie Royall of kynge Henry the
viii. of famouse memory oure naturall father began
thys worthye and noble enterpryse, that we intende,
whose steppes we will followe for the performaūce
of hys wyll, seynge that he beinge preuented with
deathe coulde not bringe that thinge to suche perfect
end, as hys mynd was at the fyrste attemptinge ther-
of. We haue determined therefore to pursewe the fa-
mouse enterpryse of oure moste famouse father, and
not onely to plucke vp by the rootes, and vtterlye bā-
nishe out of our kingdome the name of Antichrist and
his Jurisdiction: but also clearely to purge ỹ mindes
of oure subiectes from all wycked idolatry, hereſie,
and superstycyon, and suche lyke deuelishnes as by
hym was brought in.

And for asmuche as there is none other thynge that moueth vs thus to doe but the onelye glory of god: we dout not but that Christ wilbe with vs, and will rule oure councelles and doynges with his holy spirite. And althoughe I dout not but that you study likewise with an earnest feruentnes of spirite to set forthe this high glory of god: yet haue we thought good to disclose thys oure intent and purpose to you being our dearely beloued and faythful cõsaylours To thintent that thys godly dede maye be the more spedely brought to passe.

Counseil. Suerly your maiesty could haue tolde vs nothynge that could haue pleased vs better either that canne be more to the glory of God: more profytable to the common welthe, or elles more worthy and honorable to a Christian kynge. Wherefore we be compelled to render immortal thankes to God, and hauinge a tast of youre graces wisdome by thys thing, to hope for greater and more excellent enterprises of you then any manne would conceaue, in that we perceaue so muche sage and auncient wisedome in thys your so tender age, and so feruent a Zeale to the settinge forth of goddes glorye. For thys thynge is commonly seen by the common course of nature that suche menne as be of the common sort and of slender corage, be colde and slacke in the waye of the Lorde, yea and be many tymes offended with suche a confusion and varietie of iudgementes, when they see noble men so caryed with a blynde and a wicked zeale with all that euer they canne make for the defense of wicked Babilon, and of theyr deuelishe Antichrist, not staynge with blody handes and blody hartes to bee glutted

glutted and made dronke with the bloude of Chriſte and of his electes, & many times alſo haue they the better hand, as the heauenly prophet Daniel prophecied. But your pryncely maieſtie, as one indued with a high and a heauenly courage, haue intended a gloryouſe enterpryſe, and that beinge ſtyred vp and inflamed thereunto with a feruent zeale to the glorye of god, and ye haue taken vpon you the cauſe of Chriſte and hys electes agaynſte all the enemies of god. Neither canne there bee any more worthye meanes deuiſed to ſet forth both the glorye of god and alſo of youre moſte excellent maieſtie. And it is not to be douted but that god will vſe your maieſtie as a heauenly meane and a fautles inſtrument to ouerthrowe hys greate enemy, euen as in tymes paſt he vſed Dauyd for an inſtrumente to ouerthrowe Goliathe. Youre maieſtie maye ſtryke of hys head as Dauid Goliathes, euen with hys owne ſworde, that is to ſaye, with the worde of God, whiche he hathe moſte fylthely abuſed in deſpyte of Chriſte. There were verely not a fewe of the olde Emperours who attempted the puttynge downe of thys tyrannye, as Henry the fourthe & fift, Lewes the fourth, Frederyke the fyrſte and ſeconde, and many moe, who coulde not ouercome hym becauſe he reygned in the myndes of men: and the people tooke hym for theyr god in earth, they feared his thunderboltes & excommunications, they thought thēſelues dāpned yf they contraryed hym neuer ſo litle, & therefore coulde they not in good earneſt put on theyr harnes & take theyr weapons, with a valyant corage of ſpirite, to delyuer the Chriſtyan common welthe from thys ſo 1. Reg. viii

great a tyranny. Ed. Yf we minde to ouercome him in short space, we must fyrste goe about to dryue him out of the heartes of menne: for as soone, as he hathe once lost his spiritual kingdome in mens consciences, he shall forgoe by and by al the rest of his iurisdiccio, without any greate difficultie. And to dryue him out of the heartes of men it is not nedefull to vse swoord, nor violence: the swoorde of the spirite, that is the woorde of god, is sufficient, wherby Christe ouercame and conquered hys enemy Sathan in the desert. For all his whole popeshippe is nothinge elles but a manifest deceyt, and lye. What thynge canne it bee elles but a lye, to saye the churche was buylded by Christ vpō Peter: and that Peter was instituted by Christ the heade of the other apostles, and of the vniuersall churche: and that Cephas, in oure tonge signifieth a heade: and that when Christ saied to Peter, fede me shepe, he made him the onelye shepard of soules, and gaue to hym alone the keyes of the kingdome of heauen, and power to loose and bynde: yt is also a verye vayne lye to saye, Peter was at Rome, and that Peter had authority geuen him of Christ to leaue there, and also that he left there the chiefe byshoppes seate, as in one certayne place, there by succession continually to remayne to the byshoppes of Rome, (as they holde opinion) it is also a manifest lye, and deceyte to saye, that Christe is not oure onelye sauyour, medyatour, and aduocat. Purgatory also deuised by them is a lye, and theyr lately deuised confessyons, absolutions, pardons, Jubelies, blessinges, cursinges, and excommunications, bee all lyes. And also theyr heresies, hipocrisies, Idolatry, promesses, flatteringes superstitiō, & theyr deuelishe, & tyrannicall authoritie,

which

which they vsurpe, and chalenge, with al their whole Popehod be altogether lyes. Wherefore seinge the word of god is, ȳ most bright light, at the sight wher- of all falsehod, and lyes be knowen, and auoyded, and the trueth apeareth inuincible: it muste nedes be, that euē as darkenes vanisheth away at ȳ sight of ȳ sūne euen so at the shinynge of goddes worde all lyes, de- ceytes, treasōs, & wickednes of the Pope shal decaye & vtterly be plucked vp by ȳ rotes. This is ȳ spiritu- all sworde by whose edge (as Paule prophecied) he must be slaine. Wherefore if we minde to attayne ho- nor, & glory, that neuer shal perishe by thys noble en- terprise, we muste searche all about and get the most faythfull ministers of goddes worde, whiche be in- dued with a great light of ȳ spirite, in the knowledge, and exposicion of the scriptures, with a heauenly elo- quence, boldnes, and lybertye, whiche ministers bothe canne, and will prynte Christe in the heartes of manne. Then with out doubt shall Antichrist, and all his whole kingdom be ouerthrowē by and by. This must be oure hoste, these must be oure fotemen, these must be our horse men, if we mynde to ouercome this enemie of god. And yf we can not fynde enough suche menne within oure owne dominions, they muste bee sought for where so euer they maye be founde, good learnīg must be made much of, & promoted forward, good wittes must bee norished, and prouoked to lear- nyng & studie, that the heauenly philosophie of Christ maye reigne alwayes in oure kingedom. Then suerly shal we not be ashamed, whē we shalbe neuer so much excomunicated of ȳ wicked romishe Robber: but we shall rather reioyce, & with a valiant and bold corage, we shall laugh to scorne his cursinges, and blessinges

all together: not settinge a strawe by the whole rabble of the rest of hys wickednes, his absolucions, dispensacions, priuileges, bulles, and pardons,

2d. Throughe the sinne of oure fore father Adam we bee naturallye so fraile, and weake, so blinde and froward, ỹ we seke for nothinge els but our owne. Wherfore yf we will be moued to set forth and amplifie the most high glory of god, it is he that must moue & stirre vs with hys heauenly spirite. And for asmuche as we knowe, and bee very well assured that all oure desire and purposes concerninge thys matter bee bent towardes the glory of god, & accoyding to his word, we maye be bolde to saye that thys intente of ours is a worke of God. Therefore euen as it cannot be, that God wyl forsake him self, and leaue of to be God: So also can it not be but that he wyl further thys worke to a good ende (whiche is not oures, but altogether his,) we doubt not therfore, but that God wyll be of our syde, and that he wyl triumphe ouer hys enemies.

Counsel Suerly it shalbe a very easie thynge to obteyne what thyng soeuer is godly of youre maiesties subiectes. For euen as after the transgression of Adam, god grafted a certayne terriblenes of countenaunce in manne wherby he shoulde make beastes affrayed with lokyng vpon manne, lest they shoulde hurt hym. So hath he indued subiectes with a certayne naturall feare towardes their leage lordes, that they may reuerently obey them. Wherfore yf a prynce or kyng intende a thynge, and then declare thesame to be hys mynde, and pleasure with a certaine effectualnes, and authoritie: by and by they all obey, namelye when he offereth matters vnto them, that be iuste and godlye, but as for the trueth of the doctrine of the gospell, is

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of it selfe most effectual, & therfore we doubt not but it wil come to passe that it shall gladly be receyued of al menne, especially, when it shalbe offered vnto them vf the maiestie of a kynge, and he shall confirme the same with vprightnes of lif. Neither is it to be doubted that the gospell should breed any tumulte in these dominions, or cause any sedicio or losenes of libertie, for Christe dothe approue, and confirme chiefelye the power and authoritie of princes, and magistrates, and causeth menne to thynke humbly, and lowely of them selues, & to loue peace and quietnes, and therfore as thoughe they were gentle lambes, it shalbe an easie thyng, & no great payne to rule them.

Ed. We know ryght well that a sicke body, which is ful of corrupt humors, can not be purged, and clensed with out some commocion, and stirryng of the body and membres: and euen so is it of our kingdomes. And we also knowe that the gospell is a moste swete and pleasant medecine to the chosen of god, although it turne the stomake of suche, as be reiected. And euen as he shoulde not bee a good father, who hauinge a sone sicke, that he could make whole again with some medicine: and yet durst not minister the same vnto him for feare of stirryng of hys body, & so suffer hys sonne to perish with the greatnes of the disease: So should not we bee a good kynge, yf, when we shall see oure people sicke of a spirituall disease (as in dede we doe) shoulde suffer them to perishe eternally for feare of a cõmocion, & should not minister vnto them the wholesome medecine of the gospell, wherby to restore them agayne to health. Wherfore we be in a full readyness to aduenture not onely our honor, but also our lyfe it selfe for the wealth of our people, and for the glory of

God. There be not a fewe, that wyll goe about to stey vs from thys noble enterpryse. They saye that the Greekes, and other nacions of the East partes of the worlde were punished of God by the tyrannye of the Turke, bycause they refused to obey the Pope. As thoughe the Popes tyranny were not a great deale greater and crueller then is the tyranny of the Turke. Or as thoughe Affryke, and Asia had in tymes paste bene subiect to the Pope. Neither minde we to rente or louse the seemeles coate of Christ, as some peraduenture wyll thynke, who hathe cut it into so manye smale peces, that it cānne be deuided nomore. But we mynde to cutte and teare asunder the veale of hypocrysie that their vice and wickednes maye be knowē of all menne. Thys thing is without question: as ofte as euer the Turke hathe fought with the Christian menne, for the most parte he hath had the ouer hand, whiche God suffered so to be, not onely to punishe vs for that in stead of Christe, we haue worshypped Antichrist: but also bycause he minded by litle & litle to withdrawe vs, and deliuer vs from the wicked tyranny of Antichrist. And it is not to be doubted, but ȳ euen as the Iewes be punished chiefly for the sinnes of their priestes, bycause they were ȳ causers of the deathe of Christe: so be the Christian men punyshed thys daye for the sinnes of Antichrist, and his priestes who haue crucified Christ agayne muche more in despite of God, then the Iewes dyd in tymes paste. Wherefore yf we wyll preuayle agaynst the Turke, firste lette vs thrust thys wicked manne out of the churche of God, whiche is a home dwellyng Turke, for whose sinnes God beinge offended with vs vseth that whippe for the punishemente of the Christians,

and

and when god is once pleased, and contented agayne with vs, we shall easelye by goddes helpe giue hym the ouerthrowe. Therefore let vs dryue all heresie, idolatrye, superstition, & wickednes, out of the church of god, and then shall we not onely triumphe ouer the turkes: but also they will bee conuerted to Christe, when they shall see the beames of the light of the gospel, and the holy life of the Christians spreade ouer al. This arrant theefe of Rome hath robbed ỹ worlde vnder the pretence of religion, and battayle agaynste the turkes, and to deliuer the Christians, whiche bee amongest the turkes in seruitude and bondage. Let hym nowe dryue hym selfe out of the churche of god, if he mynde to delyuer vs out of bondage, whiche is muche more cruell and tyrannical then the other. Let hym dryue Sathan out of hym selfe and out of his wicked Babilon and then beinge conuerted and armed with spirituall vertues, and with the swoorde of goddes woorde, folowing the example of Christ, and hys apostles, let hym fyght agaynste gods enemies. And if it so be that he canne not be amended, but wil continue on still in hys wicked and cruell tyrannye, so that he will cõpell force to be made, let it be made, agaynste hym, for he onely noyeth more the church of Christe, then all the enemies of god ioyned together. We hate not the popes parson, but hys abhominations, whome all menne ought of deutie to abhorre.

Counsell. Euen as ỹ doctrine of the gospell excelleth all other kindes of learninge in pureues, gentlenes, pleasauntnes, profytablenes, excellencie, and wonderfulnes: So if it bee infected once with neuer so litle an heresy, it is more pestilent and pernicious then

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then anye other. Wherfore lette vs doe all oure indeuoure that it being pourged from all false and superstitious imaginacions, and mannes traditions maye bee ministred to the people, pure, simple, and syncere, as it is of it selfe. And as concernynge the articles of the faythe, the worde of God ought to be sufficient, except we wyll seeme wiser then God hym selfe. And as touchynge woorkes, the lawe that God hym selfe hathe made, whiche is most pure and holye shal be sufficiente. Whose preceptes be without spot, sounde, and cherefull to the mynde. Whereunto Christes interpretacion muste bee annexed. And as for prayer and inuocacion, what shall wee rather alowe then the Lordes prayer, whiche the sonne of God hymselfe taught vs. Whiche teacheth vs playnely and fullye what we ought to aske of God. And it also teacheth howe we ought to aske all gyftes of God, thzoughe Christe oure mediatoure,

Forsothe it is a wicked thynge to desyer to bee moze wyse then was Christe hymselfe: who deliuered vs that prayer as a perfecte forme of prayer, wherefore it canne not bee well to adde any thynge thereunto. Trulye all doctrine that is necessarye for saluacyon is playne and cleare yf we darken it not with the darkenes of mannes inuentions.

We wyll therefore dooe oure dylygence, fyrste to put a waye all suche thynges as maye bee a hynderaunce to the goinge forwarde of the Gospell, and hauynge allwayes goddes honour before oure eyes, & the helthe of soules, we will pray that he wyll graunt vnto vs that purenes and earnestnes of spirit,

that

that we maye sette forth hys glory, and serue hym in holines, and that we may throughe Jesu Christ oure redemer gyue all prayse, glory, and honor to God the father euerlastynge.

Amen.

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